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Youth culture, media and globalization processes in Greenland

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Abstract

Globalization has been advantageous for Greenland, in that it has broken the country's isolation. The disadvantages described as results of modernization and globalization processes, such as the annihilation of local cultures, giving rise to further stratification problems or causing frustrations as individuals long for things they cannot achieve, are discussed in this article in relation to Thomas Ziehe's levels of modernization's penetration into society, culture and the individual. The analysis is based on empirical data from quantitative and qualitative research among 12–19-year-olds in Greenland in 1997 and 2001. As we see, the local culture is not at all in danger of annihilation. Socio-economic differences exist and are unfortunately entangled in ethnic and centre–periphery factors. The young peoples' leisure habits reveal an urge for a global lifestyle, but its limited availability does not seem to lead to a sense of being left behind as deprived locals in a global world.

Keywords

ambivalences of globalization, cultural release, globalization, global versus local, youth in Greenland

‘Foreign television opened a window to the world to me,’ a young student from Tasilaq on Greenland’s east coast said to me. She had spent a year at an American college, and was now studying journalism in Nuuk. ‘Had I never had the possibility to look at American television’, she said, ‘I never would have learned English, I never would have wanted to study in America and I would never have begun to study journalism’ (Girl, 19, Nuuk [my translation from Danish]).

This is a gratifying remark heard from a media researcher’s point of view, and one that made me wonder about the positive effects of globalization. Being a part of the technological blessings of the ‘Global Village’, as the Canadian media researcher Marshall McLuhan (1964) named it in the 1960s, seemed to benefit small communities in Greenland. The debate surrounding globalization, however, is a heated one and, like the Polish-English sociologist Zygmunt Bauman, some of those involved see globalization as a contributor to discrimination almost in line with earlier cultural imperialism theory.

To judge from the young student’s statement, television was to her a ‘magic multiplier’ (Golding and Harris, 1997: 4) which, according to communication research, represents the first of three stages. Due to her reaction to television, she chose to study abroad for a while, illustrating mobility as one of the much-coveted values of globalization. By means of such mobility, the fear of ‘cultural imperialism’ – the second stage (Golding and Harris, 1997: 4) – to some extent is dissolved.

From this example and a superficial glance over the country’s youth culture, Greenland certainly has become ‘globalized’, as the third and present phase puts it (Golding and Harris, 1997: 4). Almost everyone has a mobile phone. According to age and gender, rooms are decorated with Marilyn Manson or Madonna. Young Greenlanders’ favourite movies are the latest releases from Hollywood and their enjoyment of them is enhanced with Coca-Cola. Their clothes are chosen from among the significant brand names and yet we clearly feel a local ‘touch’ – we are definitely in Greenland and globalization seems not just to be the uneven battle between David and Goliath, which the traditional cultural imperialism model describes, in which a powerful centre totally dominates the periphery. Several weaknesses of that simplistic model have been described in recent years, and I mention here just a few relevant to my Greenlandic examples. First, the traditional model exaggerated the external determinants and underestimated the internal dynamics in the dependent society. Second, the traditional model wrongly assumed that audiences are passive and that local creativity and resistance – or simple satisfaction or ignorance – are of little significance. Third, the model takes for granted that everything that comes from the West is bad news for everybody.

However, for obvious reasons, the exchange is still somewhat unbalanced. Greenland is an enormous, remote, ice and mountain-hampered country with a tiny population of just 56,000 inhabitants. Even though it is located geographically as a part of North America, ever since 1721, when Hans Egede settled as a missionary among the Inuit, it has been colonized by Denmark. This has had social consequences as regards language and cultural impact. In 1953 Greenland’s status as colonized was modified and it became a fully integrated dependency of Denmark. In 1979 Greenland obtained home rule government and political forces are at the present time striving to achieve autonomy. Cultural interchange between Greenland and the rest of the world is still mostly one-way as far as media products such as television programmes, music and

films are concerned – often with Denmark as gatekeeper. However, this does not mean that global influences inevitably penetrate to a deeper, more personal level.

In this article I try to measure the degree to which some aspects of young Greenlanders' lives have become globalized. The first question is how to measure globalization and its actual influence? In my view, assessment of the connection between globalization and lifestyle is one way to measure it. It is my wish to ascertain the degree to which the screened reality of television and films, of music and of cyberspace affects young people's daily life, dreams and expectations.

The German youth researcher Thomas Ziehe reminds us that modernization penetrates society, its culture and also its individuals (Ziehe and Stubenrauch, 1993: 29). In the following I investigate aspects of globalization in line with Ziehe's three levels of penetration. At level one – societies' objective condition – I start by describing the SES (socioeconomic status) group classification according to the respondents' statements and their possibilities within their small communities. Subsequently I call attention to some theoretical aspects of globalization of special interest for Greenland, and finally I describe the availability of the media. At level two – social symbolic culture – I analyse what my respondents choose among opportunities offered by society. Finally, to give an impression of their subjective inner structure seen as level three, I relate results from my data about my respondents' dreams and longings as regards professional careers and places of residence.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

As part of the project entitled 'Children, Youth and Media in Greenland 1996–1997', a colleague and I started our research with a broadly scoped pilot survey in Nuuk, which qualifies for being studied separately by being quite different from the other communities in Greenland (Rygaard, 1999).

In 1997 we initiated our nation-wide qualitative and quantitative study. A survey was sent to schools in Upernavik, Aasiaat, Sisimiut, Qaqortoq, Tasiilaq and Ittoqqortoormiit, all of which are considered as townships or cities. In-depth interviews were conducted in all these communities except Aasiaat.¹ The cohort from the nation-wide survey consisted of 454 young people between 12 and 19 years of age, i.e. 9 percent of persons that age in Greenland. Finally we interviewed 120 out of the entire group. The questionnaire contained 75 questions similar to those of the pilot survey as regards lifestyle, media use and attitudes toward media. The quantitative data in this article are based on this survey presented as descriptive statistics.

Between 1999 and 2001 we proceeded with a reception study entitled 'Young People's Media Cultures in a Reception Perspective'. One of the projects was the 'Cam/Di' project (Camera/Diary Project). In the townships of Nuuk, Sisimiut and Ittoqqortoormiit we supplied 101 informants between 12 and 19 years of age with disposable cameras and with diaries which had to be used during one week in the autumn of 2000. We asked them to describe 'their life with the media'. We received 696 pictures and 313 related diary texts (Pedersen and Rygaard, 2003).

LEVEL ONE: SOCIETY'S OBJECTIVE CONDITIONS AND SOCIOECONOMIC GROUPS

Since the accessibility and use of media has a clear correlation to socioeconomic status² [hereafter SES] – at least at the beginning of the diffusion process – we asked our respondents, in both our pilot and our nation-wide questionnaires, about their family background. In discussing globalization, Greenland's immense size and the structural differences between townships make it advisable to analyse the data with reference to relevant socioeconomic status groups.

As regards age and gender, the sample of 454 displays a rather even distribution. As for language, the majority speak Greenlandic only (63%); a small minority speak Danish only (10%) and a larger minority are bilingual (27%). The correlation between language and social group is a strong one. Bilinguals are distributed fairly evenly among the different social groups. Among the Danish-speaking children, most belong to the two upper social groups, whereas most of the Greenlandic-speaking children belong to the two lower social classes or to the category that includes unemployed parents. Some regions are seriously affected by insufficient job opportunities; hence the SES groups differ in size in the various communities. Since the parent generation in Greenland is still unaccustomed to choosing professional careers that require an advanced education, the SES groups 4, 5 and 0 dominate, especially in the outer districts such as Upernavik, Ittoqqortoormiit and Tasiilaq. The majority of the unemployed (or indefinable answers) are to be found in Tasiilaq and Ittoqqortoormiit. Both townships are seriously disadvantaged as regards sufficient infrastructure and job possibilities. The figures for SES group 1 are of the same small size in the different townships, apart from Aasiaat and Qaqortoq, both of which are communities with a higher educational level.

The low level of education that particularly dominates in small and remote townships such as Upernavik on the northwest coast and Tasiilaq and Ittoqqortoormiit on the east coast, reflect the somewhat confined activities of the younger generation with regard to educational or professional practical training possibilities. Replies to the enquiry I sent to the involved communities in July 2001 confirmed my impression of substantial structural differences existing between some regions and communities. Many of the cherished joys of youth life such as cinemas, clubs and discotheques are not available in most communities. In many places there is not even a grill bar, a clothing store or a place to rent videos. At best young people can meet at a sports hall. On the other hand, one certainly is able to find other interesting leisure occupations such as sailing, fishing, kayaking, skiing, dog sledding, camping & hiking, which adventure-seeking youngsters in the metropolitan areas may look upon with envy. The question is, however, whether that is what the Greenlandic youth are dreaming of?

THEORIES OF GLOBALIZATION IN RELATION TO GREENLAND: THE MONSTER OF DISCRIMINATION OR THE SAVIOUR FROM NATIONAL ISOLATION?

Even though Greenland has for many years been able to receive sound and pictorial transmission – radio since 1940–45, telephone since 1972–78, and television since 1982 – the personal computer with ISDN, the internet and email must nevertheless be interpreted as a substantially new kind of connection to the global world. Consequently, growth of technologically distributed information in Greenland has proceeded at a considerable pace since 1997, when these facilities were introduced. Although the term globalization is older and broader in scope, since it refers to everything from the world capitalist economy to the emergence of the world military order, it is the modern information technology and media that are the crucial key factors when we speak about globalization in Greenland.

Globalization points to the hypothesis that we all live in one uniform world: films, music, television and fashion are speedy travellers, connecting young audiences everywhere. Remote cultures become accessible through television, radio, internet and easy transport. Due to the internationalization of the market economy, goods and services cross borders, thereby annihilating local cultures, according to the sombre picture painted by Zygmunt Bauman (1998) among others. The English sociologist, Anthony Giddens, however, does not see tangible American manifestations such as Coca-Cola, McDonald's and Hollywood films (of which only Coca-Cola and, to a certain degree, Hollywood films are represented in today's Greenland) as expressions of traffic that merely goes one way. Decentralization and 'reversed colonization' (Giddens, 2000: 21) also make their presence felt. Furthermore, Giddens maintains that the cosmopolitan way of life and widespread international tourism represent one of the major effects of globalization (Giddens, 2000). But a cosmopolitan way of life is not to be attained by everybody, Bauman claims: 'All of us are doomed to the life of choices, but not all of us have the means to be choosers' (Bauman, 1998: 86). The postmodern consumer society is a stratified one. Universal freedom and mobility are but phantoms: the freedom to buy things and to choose where to go is the prerogative of the elite only. Globalization is supposed to unite the people of the world, but according to Bauman the truth is that it causes isolation and degradation: to be local in a global world 'is a sign of social deprivation and degradation' (Bauman, 1998: 2).

What Bauman and Giddens outline is but a partial truth about paradoxes of globalization in Greenland as it is in (other) former third world countries.³ Many of their statements may be adequate definitions for the consequences of globalization among young people in big cities, but for smaller Greenland localities, other fears are often more urgent. The geographic isolation of Greenland simply sets other standards for postmodern ambivalences. However, one problem of globalization that people in Greenland recognize is the deprivation of local society by the departure of the elite, which drains impoverished local communities of their resources. But to take in the warnings of globalization one needs to look more closely at some of the statements. Let us start, for instance, to define what is meant as regards the culture that is in danger of annihilation. In one example Bauman describes a female globetrotter living in an annihilated culture, which he terms the 'culture of the absolute present':

She constantly migrates, and among many places, and always to and fro. She does it alone, not as a member of community, although many people act like her. . . . The kind of culture she participates in is not a culture of a certain place; it is the culture of a time. It is a culture of the *absolute present*. [. . .] She stays in the same Hilton hotel, eats the same tuna sandwich for lunch, or, if she wishes, eats Chinese food in Paris and French food in Hong Kong. She uses the same type of fax, and telephones, and computers, watches the same films, and discusses the same kind of problems with the same kind of people. (Bauman, 1999: 89)

The situation described above would be very difficult to find anywhere in Greenland. Perhaps in Nuuk the globetrotter would be able to experience a few of the features of absolute present-day culture, but in some of the small townships she would not even find a hotel – let alone a Hilton! The traces of globalization she would find would be communication and information gadgets: the fax, the telephone and the computer. By chance she might find the same kind of film on television or at the video store and possibly some canned Chinese and French food in the store. The concepts of ‘control’ and ‘predictability’, (Ritzer, 1996) which prevent the global tourist from feeling uneasy about new things, are hard to find in the small townships in Greenland’s outer districts. As regards the opportunities for being able to discuss familiar problems, Bauman’s globetrotter probably wouldn’t feel at home in the discussions that take place, if even she could understand them. But whether the young people living in these districts are deprived and degraded is another matter, which I will return to later.

One of the positive aspects of globalization is reputedly ‘the end of geography’, but in the case of Greenland geographical facts still are of utmost importance. Remembering Bauman’s allegation that television sells daydreams or examples to follow and hence undermines people’s interest in local life – the local ‘sounds’ – I asked my students if they believed that the local ‘sounds’ are in danger of being quelled in Greenland. This young girl’s answer is typical for the attitude of the majority.

No, as a matter of fact, I don’t think so. I don’t even think that the local sounds in Greenland will ever be quelled, because Greenland as viewed geographically is and always will be an outlying district relative to the rest of the world. It will always be difficult to travel to the outer districts. Just now we have even heard that the prices of the air tickets have risen even more. Moreover, the weather is still the determining factor as regards all traffic and from time to time also as regards electronic communication. (NN, 19 years old, Nuuk, 2001 [the author’s translation from Danish])

This young girl is, like everybody in Greenland, familiar with the sad experience of giving up a scheduled journey simply because one connection fails due to bad weather. She also knows how annoying it is to miss the decisive seconds of a television film because the satellite transmission is interrupted and she knows the feeling of not being able to reach the ‘world’ if both telephone and internet connections break down. Most people living in Greenland have serious problems paying the very high prices for air travel. Faced with obstacles such as these, the vulnerability of the local society’s connection with the global world becomes very apparent. But certainly it is not a connection one would give up voluntarily.

Even though its geography thus sets some standards for Greenland’s globalization, other aspects are part of an inescapable development in high modernity. The all-pervading omnipresence and synchronism – the space/time compression effect –

provide the individual with a world-encompassing standard of comparison for how to live a fulfilling life. Giddens points to how the standard of comparison promotes important changes such as political and gender oppression. Existing social institutions, existing patterns of consumption and ways of living, ideas about how to fulfil oneself through one's work, etc. are now all under constant evaluation. At the individual level this dominant standard of comparison generates ambitions and longings for a life lived in accordance with this standard. Globalization causes greater expectations. Ziehe's term 'cultural release' explains this new abundance of possibilities (Ziehe and Stubenrauch, 1993: 31). However, just as Bauman pointed to ambivalence toward globalization, we find that Ziehe points to ambivalence towards cultural release. Identity and self-evaluation are no longer simply inherited: the individual is now free to try out, to transform, to modify and to formalize his or her own life and identity. The gap, however, between longing and fulfilling as regards lifestyle, goods and 'subjectivity' (Ziehe and Stubenrauch, 1993: 32) can be very difficult to bridge. Besides, even if some of the longings are fulfilled, they do not necessarily result in changes on the psychological plane.

Of special interest here, concerning emphasized ambivalences towards globalization, is the frustration caused by the fact that prospects and possibilities are known, but beyond reach. Many besides Bauman have described this: Robert Musil called it the 'potentiality sense' (Ziehe and Stubenrauch, 1993: 35); the social psychologist, Heiner Keupp (Jørgensen, 2002: 123) sees it as 'risky chances'; and Ziehe also describes the problem of being conscious of the many possibilities that one suddenly sees and misses as part of cultural release. The psychological consequences of such a deprivation could range from a desire for change, as we saw in the example of the young girl from east Greenland, to a paralysing depression or even to somatic illness (Ziehe and Stubenrauch, 1993: 33). In line with Ziehe, the Norwegian media researcher Anita Werner found the cultural clashes between media, life-styles and local life to give rise to consumerist frustrations: 'Being introduced to hitherto unknown material benefits, and at the same time meeting obstacles in acquiring them, is conducive to frustration and powerlessness' (Werner, 1979 [author's translation into English]). The English sociologist Peter Townsend has also described deprivation. In 1979 he compiled an index of deprivation in his study *Poverty in the United Kingdom* (Townsend, 1979). Using the concept of relative poverty, he showed that the lower the household income, the greater the extent of deprivation. In his index, he defines lack of 'social activities' as 'no afternoon or evening out for entertainment in the previous two weeks' and uses this as one of the standards of comparison (Townsend, 1979: 250). According to the standards of Townsend's index, the youth in many of the small settlements in Greenland are deprived.

Certainly Greenland youth also risk many of the undesirable aspects of globalization, of cultural release, of frustration and deprivation. The gap between what can be achieved under optimal conditions and what is possible under the conditions prevailing in Greenland is huge. This is not, however, tantamount to saying that globalization is therefore to blame. Does an alternative to globalization exist? And do the young people actually feel frustrated, powerless and deprived when a media screen makes them face living conditions which are widely different from their everyday environment?

The alternative to globalization and cultural release is not inviting. Greenland without inspiration from the outside would be a country which remained isolated

and whose major problems would perhaps not even be recognized as problems. The typical 'problems' which exist in geographically remote micro-states are:

. . . smallness, remoteness, constraints in transport and communications, great distances from market centres, highly limited internal markets, lack of marketing expertise, low resources endowment, lack of natural resources and dependence on narrow range of agricultural resources, heavy dependence on a few commodities for their foreign exchange earnings, very narrow range of local skills with a critical shortage of trained manpower, serious balance of payment problems and heavy financial burdens, limited access to capital markets, dependence on one or few large companies often foreign owned and operating on highly privileged terms. Shortage of administrative personnel, proneness to certain types of natural disasters such as cyclones or avalanches in the polar region, highly fragile ecology and very vulnerable physical environment. (Jonsson, 1995: 72)

In such small countries there are also problems of nepotism due to interpersonal relations between the individuals. Furthermore, high rates of suicide, alcohol and child abuse as well as violence in families speak for themselves about the problems that especially confront very small societies.

I find that the fear of the annihilation of local cultures leads to a counter question: who are the ones who want to preserve the local culture? It is rarely the people living in the culture in question who fear its substitution by something new. More often you hear the fear expressed from tourists who seek thrills of authenticity. An example will illustrate this. The Danish/Greenlandic film *Heart of Light* from 1997 is not the typical young Greenlanders' idea of how the true essence of their local culture should be represented. During a film festival in Nuuk in 1998 several of the young viewers objected to the way in which contemporary Greenland culture was presented as a hopeless prospect, whereas the return to the traditional culture seemed to be the remedy to help the Greenlander find his way. A German film buyer among the participants thought that the film was excellent because it showed Greenland as it *really* was. For the young people the film seemed to promulgate a past culture, which is not at all recognizable or attractive.

Therefore, much as I agree that Bauman, Ziehe and Musil's warnings that modernization and globalization can lead to situations in which people face the torments of Tantalus, I still do not see any alternative to globalization for a country like Greenland. For Greenland as for the rest of the world, there is no turning back.

MEDIA AVAILABILITY

As a precondition for, as well as a consequence of, globalization, the media make it advisable to interpret leisure culture as a result of their own impact. Table 1 displays the different SES groups' access to the media. We asked questions about the kind of media equipment to which the informants had access – be it in their own room or in their parents' houses or in the shared facilities of a students' hostel.

Television accessibility is high among all SES groups. Everybody either owns a television set or has easy access to one. In groups 1, 2 and 3, over 70 percent have a television set in their own room; in groups 4, 5 and 0, the figure is lower, at about 50 percent. However, if we consider the categories 'own' and 'access' as one unit, we observe a clear correlation to the SES groups. The total figure for ownership and

Table 1 Media ownership and/or media access for 12–19-year-olds by SES group (%)

	SES 1 (35)		SES 2 (72)		SES 3 (40)		SES 4 (129)		SES 5 (83)		SES 0 (96)	
	Own	Access	Own	Access	Own	Access	Own	Access	Own	Access	Own	Access
Television	72	53	70	63	82	55	54	85	44	100	60	100
Video	59	63	46	70	64	70	33	91	44	94	35	92
CD	100	16	100	27	100	36	100	48	100	50	98	56
Radio	75	44	77	30	73	30	69	56	77	67	58	60
Computer	28	53	23	45	18	48	19	22	17	29	13	23
Internet	3	34	4	18	0	24	2	12	2	8	4	4
<i>n</i> =	32		56		33		91		52		52	

Note: In some cases the categories 'Own' + 'Access' are above 100% because some have both their own media devices and access to either their parents' or the shared facilities in the boarding school or college. In cases where the 'access' does not seem as high as could be expected, age-related variables play a part. Some of the young people do not live at their parents' home, but in school houses and student hostels. Figures in brackets = total number of persons in the group in question.

access in SES group 0 is much higher than in SES 1, and in general the figures increase as we go down the social ladder. Television has always had the reputation of being the darling of the lower classes.

The total accessibility for video is rather high in all SES groups, and a positive economic correlation can be found between the category 'own' and the upper SES groups, whereas the opposite is the case for 'access': the lower the SES group the higher the coverage.

CDs are the most preferred electronic device. Nearly everybody has his/her own CD player.

With regard to computers, and especially the internet, we should bear in mind that the data derive from 1997, which is just before the computer age really blossomed in Greenland. Owning or having an access to a computer is highly correlated to SES groups. Again, as was the case with the television set, the dividing line for accessibility to a personal computer is between the socioeconomic groups of 1, 2, 3 on the better side, and 4, 5 and 0 for lesser coverage. The percentages for computer access in parents' houses or in shared facilities, however, in all groups are higher than the figures for ownership of a computer.

All figures for internet 'access' are very low. Not surprisingly, the figures for groups 1, 2 and 3 are somewhat higher than those for 4, 5 and 0. In 1997 prices for internet time were extremely high in Greenland and the connection was very unreliable. Since then, however, the computer age has reached Greenland: 35 percent of all inhabitants (aged over 15 years) in the country had a PC in their home in 1999. In comparison, the corresponding Danish figure was 52 percent (Grønlands Statistik, 2000). However, for a new and expensive medium such as the computer, differences in ownership mirror differences in language and places of residence. Both a centre-periphery and an ethnic factor are involved: 39.5 percent of the people living in townships or cities own a computer, whereas just 7.7 percent of the people living

in the settlements and small communities are that lucky. Among people born in Greenland only 28.2 percent own a computer, whereas the Danish group displays an impressive 72.2 percent (Grønlands Statistik, 2000). In some schools, libraries and in the internet cafés the younger generation can now enjoy all the new possibilities of the internet.

Concerning information disseminated by the media, both the supply and the level of consumption leave much to be desired. Television and the internet are the most important short-cuts to the globe at large since both the radio and the national papers convey predominantly national news. But although channel options can be quite extensive in certain districts, the Greenlandic reality does not fulfil the global dream, since few have the means to buy the satellite dishes needed. Most people have to rely on the public service channel KNR-TV, which is on the air for about nine to ten hours a day (KNR-TV, 2000). Eighty-one percent of its transmission time is used for the diffusion of Danophone programmes (mostly from channel DR1) without Greenlandic subtitles. Some of these programmes nevertheless comprise imported productions such as films, series, etc. – 18 percent in 1996, for instance (Nordic Baltic Media Trends 4, 1998). About 19 percent of transmission consists of programmes produced in Greenland (Rygaard, 2001), and these have mostly local content, and are without Danish subtitles.

Both the national papers, *Sermitsiaq* and *AG (Atuagagdliutit/Grønlandsposten)*, are published in Nuuk, the former once and the latter twice a week. Townships and settlements outside Nuuk rely on airmail for their papers. However, the delivery of the papers in the smaller settlements is highly irregular, which creates a news gap and a cultural lag. Because of the newspapers' infrequent appearance, and the fact that they concentrate on news emanating from the capital, they tend to favour 'consensus journalism' and local news. So in fact the press is not doing much to tie the population to the global world.

On the radio, which has always pursued a policy of transmitting 60 percent of its programmes in the indigenous Greenlandic language and 40 percent in Danish, the news of the day, which mainly consists of local news and a few international headlines, is read first in Greenlandic and then in Danish. Many financial resources in bilingual Greenland are earmarked for translation, but unfortunately there is no solution to this language problem in sight.

In small societies, the objective conditions have changed due to the impact of the modernization process and technological and media-related globalization. But since the media culture which people meet represents both global and local influences, the question remains: Is the local culture so strongly represented that it dominates or is the global influence so urgent and recognizable that it could be adopted immediately and hence influence the intra-psychic level of our young audience?

LEVEL TWO: CHOOSING AMONG THE SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Social background is a decisive factor in relation to leisure activities, but so are simple availability, ethnic distinctions and centre–periphery factors, as mentioned in connection with what society has to offer. Table 2 displays how the young people actually spend their leisure time. But access is not always within reach, nor can a connection

between supply of or possibilities for leisure activities and utilization be taken for granted.

To illustrate my point of local versus global leisure possibilities, the table is divided between selections of what could be called 'global style youth life' and 'local style youth life', both of which comprise leisure activities that ideally call for special places, areas or paraphernalia. The answers, however, derive from one single question: 'How often do you engage in your leisure activities?'

Starting with 'global style youth life', we see that availability distinctions and centre-periphery factors, as well as SES distinctions are problems to be considered. Lack of availability, however, could be an indication for low figures for time spent on, for instance, 'grill bar/playing slot machine'. According to the response from the communities the existence of such things is not immediate in most communities.

Comparing the favourite leisure time occupations for the marginal groups, for SES 1 these are shopping (94%), discotheque/dancing (58%), and bar/café (47%) versus SES 5 whose figures are lower in each case: shopping (68%), discotheque/dance (55%) and bar/café (19%). A clear SES-related difference may be detected (except for 'dancing'), but the general low figures for bar/café are also in most communities due to centre-periphery factors. The small communities do not have a café or a bar, at most they may have a simple grill bar serving soft drinks. All SES groups love to dance and dancing does not necessarily require money. Most of the small communities lack a youth club – along with a discotheque or a place to dance – but temporary arrangements that provide the illusion of a discotheque can be easily created. Nevertheless, the great wish we heard mentioned time and time again during our interviews was for a discotheque or a youth club.

The most popular activity in all groups is shopping – although this is clearly SES-related – but it is hard to fully understand its fascination in a small community where one or a few local shops sell everything from long-life milk to guns. Material things such as videos, CDs, clothing, make-up and sports clothes are part of what young persons wish for. Such wishes, however, are not always easy to fulfil for adolescents living in remote communities. Consumer expectations regarding foreign goods are evoked through the media, as we saw in connection with our projects. To express our gratitude to our respondents for having answered a rather lengthy questionnaire, my colleague and I asked them each to choose their favourite video, and we drew lots for a prize. In 1997 a young boy in Ittoqqortoormiit requested the film *A Vampire from Brooklyn* with Eddie Murphy. We had never heard of it, and neither had the three otherwise well-stocked shops in Nuuk. A little investigation revealed that this film was entirely new.

To judge from this example we clearly live in the age of globalization in Greenland. Advocates for globalization would find it encouraging that a small boy in one of the most isolated communities in Greenland had such up-to-date knowledge about the latest video trends from Hollywood. Opponents, however, would strongly lament the loss and destruction of a local life-style. In the meantime, one aspect of the feeling of 'powerlessness', originating from consumers' frustrations, has changed for young people in Greenland. One of the recurrent themes mentioned in the 2000 'Cam/Di' project was the ability to 'buy things on the internet' (Girl, 13, Ittoqqortoormiit).

Regarding the traditional Greenlandic activities – 'local style youth life' – the results are somewhat disheartening if we look at them from an anti-global perspective.

Table 2 Frequency of engagement in leisure activities: 12–19-year-olds by SES group (%)

	SES 1 (35)			SES 2 (72)			SES 3 (40)			SES 4 (129)			SES 5 (83)			SES 0 (96)		
	Rare	Freq	n =	Rare	Freq	n =	Rare	Freq	n =	Rare	Freq	n =	Rare	Freq	n =	Rare	Freq	n =
'Global style youth life'																		
Youth club	68	32	28	74	26	57	55	45	29	63	38	96	64	36	58	44	56	50
Discotheque/dance	42	58	33	41	59	63	25	75	32	39	61	103	45	55	65	36	64	61
Bar or café	53	47	30	51	49	59	48	52	27	59	41	91	81	19	54	80	20	41
Grill bar/playing slot machine	70	30	30	75	25	57	78	22	27	81	19	88	88	12	50	80	20	44
Shopping	6	94	31	18	82	61	17	83	29	25	75	92	32	68	59	37	63	54
'Local style youth life'																		
Greenlandic polka/dancing	93	7	28	91	9	56	96	4	27	87	13	92	80	20	54	77	23	47
Hunting/ fishing	90	10	31	84	16	57	74	26	27	95	5	91	96	4	51	88	13	48
Snowmobile	75	25	32	73	27	55	60	40	30	87	13	86	88	12	52	66	34	50
Dog sledding	93	7	30	93	7	56	89	11	28	95	5	83	96	4	52	88	13	48
Skiing/roller-skating/skateboard	77	23	30	65	35	55	70	30	27	80	20	87	90	10	50	74	26	42
Kayaking	93	7	30	81	19	57	83	17	29	94	6	83	96	4	52	94	6	47
Sewing leather/pearls	97	7	29	95	5	55	96	4	28	100	0	82	92	8	52	89	11	44

Notes: Rare = answers 'never' and 'rarely'.

Freq = answers 'daily', 'at least once in a week' and 'at least once in a month'.

n = those of the SES group who have answered the sub-questions. Rendered in absolute numbers.

Figures in brackets = total number of persons in the group in question.

Figures for 'frequent' are equally low in all categories, except for SES 3, which among others includes self-employed persons in small organizations as related in note 2. Forty percent of that group inform us that they frequently operate a snowmobile, but the majority in all groups do not. A snowmobile is a rather expensive toy, but for self-employed parents it might serve as a transport vehicle and thus be tax deductible. Dog sledding is a resource-demanding activity since it requires both a location north of the Arctic Circle and dogs as well as specific skills. The majority in all groups say that they rarely go dog sledding. The same is the case with hunting, fishing and kayaking. In small communities with few job resources, transfer incomes (benefit payments) and sealing during the winter provide the economic foundation for family life. Since winter sealing is done from sledges, the skill of dog sledding might well be communicated to the next generation. The greatest interest, however, was detected in SES 0, which shows 13 percent frequent use.

Both hunting and operating a snowmobile require skills that are rather easy to acquire, but could be economically demanding. Nevertheless, the figures for both have no significant tendency as regards SES groups. It is noteworthy that a 'resource limited activity' – Greenlandic polka/dancing – tends to increase as we go down the social ladder; this may be an indication of the distribution by language and ethnicity between the SES groups. The monolingual Greenlanders, who mostly are found in SES 4, 5 & 0, are moderately interested in Greenlandic polka/dancing. However, generally speaking, none of the figures for 'local style' activities approach the figures for 'global style' activities.

LEVEL THREE: GLOBALIZATION'S POSSIBLE EFFECTS ON CHILDREN AND YOUTHS' SUBJECTIVE INNER STRUCTURE

As already stated, I assumed that the media – and especially television – could be a possible source of inspiration for a more globalized life-style and ideas about the future for young people whose travel prospects are limited (Pedersen, 2001). Inspired by Anita Werner (1972), my colleague and I asked questions to see whether television had an effect on young Greenlanders' wishes for future jobs and places to live. We asked them partly to state realistic goals and partly dream goals. Especially in connection with the 'dream' questions we had expected a variety of exotic and far-flung places and career possibilities straight out of movies such as *The Blue Lagoon* (Kleiser, 1980) or *Nurse Betty* (LaBute, 2000), which is why I deal only with the 'dream' answers to the questions: 'If you had all possibilities, where might you dream of moving? If anything were possible for you, what job would you dream of obtaining?'

The majority of the answers concerning 'dream places' were very pragmatic and the young people considered other places in Greenland, probably locations they had visited. Furthermore, we observed significant SES correlation: the three upper SES groups dream of moving to exotic places to a greater degree than do the lower three as may be seen in Table 3.

The fact that the differences between SES groups follow an economic pattern, together with the very concise toponomic answers (e.g. America, Sugarloaf, Maine) gives us a hint that it might be the media, but more probably a possible future vacation that has inspired the answers. A cross check with other questions in the survey

Table 3 Answers to 'dream' questions. 12–19-year-olds by SES Group (%)

	SES 1 (34)	SES 2 (66)	SES 3 (37)	SES 4 (115)	SES 5 (73)	SES 0 (86)	SES 0–5 (411)
<i>Dream place to move to</i>							
Local places	50	44	54	72	82	73	66
Exotic places	41	47	41	23	15	16	27
Don't know	9	9	5	5	3	10	7
	SES 1 (21)	SES 2 (40)	SES 3 (25)	SES 4 (83)	SES 5 (42)	SES 0 (32)	SES 0–5 (243)
<i>Dream job</i>							
Local jobs	43	33	60	54	64	63	53
Exotic jobs	48	63	40	41	29	34	42
Don't know	10	5	0	5	7	3	5

Note: Figures in brackets = total number of persons in the group who answered the question.

confirms this. In many cases exactly the same holiday destination is mentioned. Nevertheless, among the exotic places, the priority 'dream' land is the USA, which alone represents 9 percent (39 of 411) of all SES groups' preferences. Could this preference be inspired by movies?

Concerning 'dream jobs', inspiration probably comes from both real life perceptions and the media. Furthermore, the SES differentiations are less clear, as can be seen in the second part of Table 3. The most wished-for job is 'pilot' in all SES groups: 16 percent (39 of 243) of respondents in SES groups 0–5 wanted to become a pilot. This wish could easily be inspired by media sources as well as from real-life perceptions, since many places only can be reached by air traffic most of the year. A weekly adventure for children and youngsters is when the helicopter arrives with goods, mail, visitors and dreams from far away.

On the other hand, we can detect certain isolated inspirations from the media in the wish for some jobs that are certainly unavailable in these small communities, such as astronaut, model, Hollywood star, rock star, tourist guide in New Zealand, yogi, or even vampire!

If the young people's 'subjective inner structure' can be deduced from their wishes for the future, we can say that the majority are much more subjected to personal experiences than mediated experiences. Only very few have fantasies of becoming a member of a globalized elite, living and working in fancy places and holding extraordinary positions. The SES correlation between economic situation, higher education, good jobs and life expectations, however, suggests that stratification is at work even though there is little global rush in small communities.

GLOBAL OR 'GLOCAL' WAY OF LIFE?

Given Greenland's characteristic features, globalization may be said to be a blessing in that it is breaking this remote country's isolation through, for instance, extending the possibilities for travel, communication and media. The many disadvantages attributed to modernization and globalization processes, such as the annihilation of local cultures, giving rise to further stratification problems among groups or causing frustrations by giving rise to longings for unattainable things and possibilities, are only qualified truths when it comes to Greenland.

The local cultures are not at all in danger of annihilation. On the contrary, in many of the small communities a more thorough penetration of a global standardized culture with a wide range of offerings to young people would seem preferable. In theory, the information flow and the outside inspiration should present adolescents with an opportunity for choosing between many different experiences, thereby helping them to develop strategies for their future. In practice, the global flow in the outer districts is so insignificant and so spasmodic that the existing reality leaves much to be desired. Although the traffic between Greenland and the rest of the world is mainly one-way and chiefly conveys merchandise and some cultural flow, the inertia of the outer districts prevents the global 'Goliath' from dominating the local 'David'.

True enough, socioeconomic differences exist and are unfortunately entangled in ethnic and centre-periphery factors. Living as a monolingual Greenlander without education or vocational training in the outer districts does not provide any economic basis for obtaining the newest media equipment or for travelling. These disadvantages in the parent group have an influence on the young people's media access. The shortcuts to global input require satellite dishes, internet and possibilities to travel outside Greenland. To indulge in media content of one's own choice necessitates owning a television and a video cassette recorder or player. The dividing line between the three upper SES and the two (or three) lower SES groups is unmistakable, but to blame globalization alone would not be fair.

At the level of symbolic culture, examples from young Greenlanders' leisure habits reveal that the urge for what could be seen as a global life-style is strongly marked. In all SES groups the interest in activities such as shopping, disco-dancing and frequenting cafés is more pronounced than the joy of dog sledding, skiing and sewing leather or pearls, although the extent to which these are enjoyed varies according to socio-economic status. The traditional way of life as shown by the film *Heart of Light* is not what the young people strive to attain. In line with their visible desire for things foreign, it seems as if these youngsters cherish whatever part of the globalized life-style that happens to be presented to them, regardless of its limited availability. They decline what is theirs for free and what tourists from other places are yearning for.

In response to ambivalent attitudes towards globalization it would be an exaggeration to claim that young people in Greenland are anything but locals in the globalized world. However, an answer to that problem in Greenland would nevertheless be to ask for more globalization – in the sense of more rather than less standardized conditions in all of Greenland's districts.

To the question of whether unattainable potentialities cause feelings of deprivation, I would say no. The survey questions and interviews reveal that by and large the majority of the young people seem content with their personal experiences (Rygaard, 2003). I inferred a certain 'non-aired satisfaction' from their lack of desire

to move to another community or country or to aspire to a job beyond their limited possibilities. This conspicuous absence of the will to go beyond what they already know intimately is disturbing when seen in relation to general notions of young people as regards adventure-seeking, dreams of the future, job careers and travels to distant countries.

The young Greenlanders who answered the survey questions only wish for the interesting things the outer world has to offer, such as CDs, movies, DVDs, the latest fashion, computers and other electronic devices. With their natural curiosity the young people seek to make exotic foreign things available and then mix them with elements from their indigenous culture, thereby creating a 'creole' interplay. Very distinct symptoms of 'creolization' can be encountered in Greenland. In fashion, which is one of its most conspicuous manifestations, we observe that even in the most remote of the small communities, young men have bleached their black hair to a very popular shade of orange. And the young girls display their colourful North Face brand coats and leggings combined with sealskin mittens with a border of polar bear fur. The shining mountain bikes do not stay on the ground; they are ridden on the frozen sea alongside dog sledges. And the most important piece of furniture, the television set, is beautifully decorated with Greenland handicraft, in front of a wall crowded with well-known foreign idols.

The availability and consumption of consumer goods is one thing; quite another is the ability to ensure that the youngsters of the future will be sufficiently educated to enable them to use existing opportunities in a constructive way. This is something that requires training in knowing what one has to look for and what one can reasonably expect. The young girl who pursued a career as a journalist asserts that she was inspired by the media, but evidently she was unusual.

Although it is from the opposite perspective, I could be criticised, like the German film buyer, for looking upon the lives of the young generation from an ethnocentric viewpoint. That is both justified and wrong. My daily perspective is Nuuk, and from a certain familiarity with the local young people, it seems to me that the possibilities for a challenging 'creole youth life' exist here. Small as it is, Nuuk lacks neither leisure activities, nor the media, nor educational challenges. But in smaller communities – and here I refer to 'cities' and not the even smaller 'settlements' – media flow and inspiration are simply not challenging enough. Even though space/time compression has made Greenland part of the global world, 'the anorak [still] tightens', as the former home rule premier, Jonathan Motzfeldt said. Growing up in environments with limited social and human resources and media might be detrimental to members of the next generation. Three of the most fundamental issues in socialization are imitation of the parents, the treatment of the child by significant others, and inspiration from cultural sources, such as folk tales and the media. These factors are crucial for the attitudes of young persons, and living in a 'poor' environment might render them 'degraded', 'powerless' and 'disadvantaged' members of the global society.

Both in the survey and during the interviews we asked very personal questions and our young respondents willingly answered. As mentioned, they did not complain much – only about not having a club, places to meet, and places to dance. I find this rather sad. They don't even know what they are missing in terms of optimal opportunities for the development of children and young people, for planning the future and inspiring dreams. Dreams and plans for the future are nourished by sparks of recognition and by having something to choose from. For many of these young

Greenlanders, gaining recognition and having something to choose from would be a luxury. As Betty Friedan (1963) said, 'I didn't know I was unhappy being a housewife until I discovered the many other possibilities!'

Notes

- 1 Aasiaat was only part of the research project because of its high school, and served as frame of reference to the high schools in Nuuk (1996) and Qaqortoq (1997).
- 2 SES 1 = self-employed in large organizations, top officials, university graduates. SES 2 = self-employed in middle-sized organizations, higher ranked public servants, middle ranked public servants with more extensive educational background. SES 3 = self-employed in small organizations, middle ranked civil servants with short-term educational background. SES 4 = subordinate public servants, skilled workers with shorter-term educational background. SES 5 = unskilled workers. SES 0 = unemployed (or indefinable answers). The categorization into social group was made according to the respondents' answers to open-ended questions about parents' or guardians' job positions. The numbers 1–5 indicate the so-called SFI-division of family social groups (Hansen, 1984). The preferred rule takes a starting point in the spouse or partner (in our context the parent or the guardian), who is in the 'highest' position in the job hierarchy. The division criteria, valid for the current job position, are the name or title of the job, the duration of training, and to what extent the individual can control his/her own or others' daily work. Concerning SES group 0, although it would be obviously rewarding to be able to differentiate between unemployed and indefinable answers, it is not possible to do this from the database (Pedersen and Rygaard, 2000: 1, 13).
- 3 Through Giddens's (1989) explanation, Greenland conforms to the term 'former third world societies' by having been colonized, by not having the status of a distinct society before colonization, by having only a low level of industrialization and by having the former traditional culture transformed by contact with the West, i.e. Denmark.

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