

Chapter 3 Identity, the Media, and Communication Technology

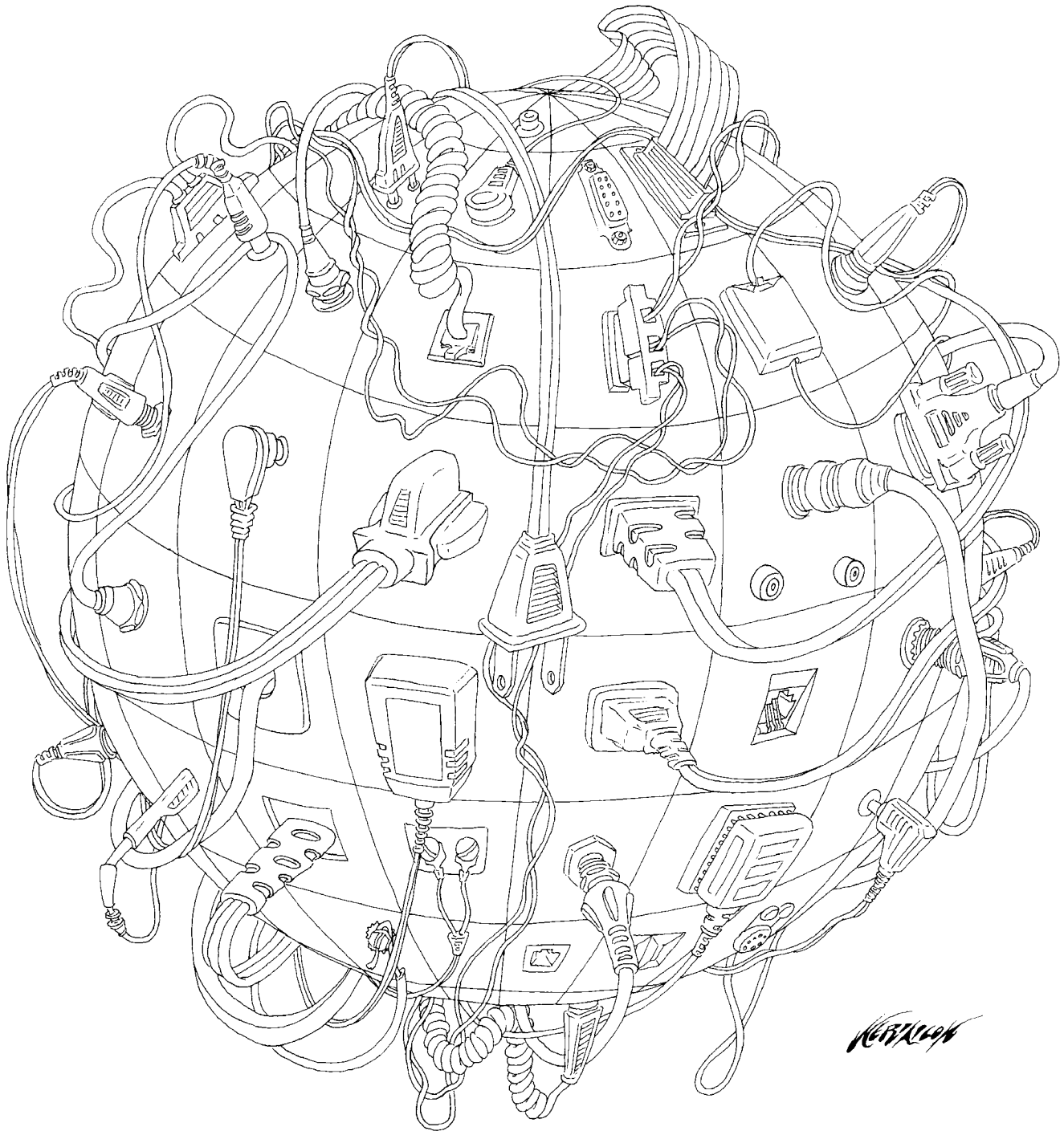


Figure 3-1 Advances in communication technology and media have affected global diversity, identity, and culture. This cartoon, titled “Globalization,” was created by Mexican cartoonist Antonio Neri Licon, also known as Nerilicon.

CHAPTER ISSUE

To what extent is identity affected by communication technology and the media in a globalizing world?

THE CARTOON on the facing page first appeared in a daily newspaper published in Mexico City. It was then posted to a web site where it can be viewed by anyone with Web access.

In today's wired world, people in many different countries can communicate almost instantly to explore current events, discuss issues, carry on business, and find out media reactions to world events.

As you think about the message of the cartoon, consider the following questions:

- What communication technologies were used to bring this cartoon to you?
- What communication technologies are represented by the plugs and cords used in the cartoon? How do people use these technologies to connect to other people around the world?
- How are the technologies shown already becoming out of date?
- Why do you suppose the cartoonist left out geographic features, such as land masses and oceans?
- How do you think interconnected communication technologies are affecting cultural diversity and people's cultural identity?

Write a one-sentence caption that captures the message of this cartoon. This caption may be a statement or question. Compare your caption with that of a partner. Is the main idea of your captions similar?

If they are different, discuss the reasons for the differences. How does your caption express your thinking about the influence of communication technologies on your life?

KEY TERMS

digital divide

propaganda

pop culture

universalization

hybridization

LOOKING AHEAD

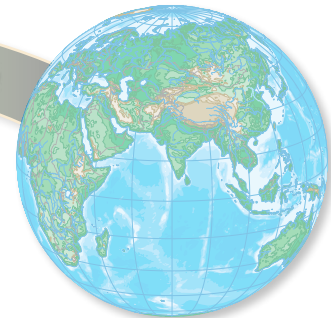
In this chapter, you will explore answers to the following questions:

- How is identity affected by opportunities to communicate with people around the world?
- How is diversity influenced by the media and communication technologies?
- How is identity affected by media coverage of world events?
- How is diversity affected by the dominance of American media?



My Point of View on Globalization

Use words or images — or both — to express your current point of view on globalization. Compare this with the points of view you have already recorded in your notebook, learning log, portfolio, or computer file. Is your point of view changing? If so, how? Date your ideas and record them so that you can continue to return to them as you progress through this course.





The more we find our lives determined by global forces and confronted with difference, the more we find ourselves driven inward to affirm our roots in our local communities. The more we become members of a global community, the more we insist on our local identity, and cherish the ties that bind us to smaller groups — a shared language, shared traditions and culture, or a common history.

— *Beverley McLachlin, chief justice of Canada, in a 2004 speech*

HOW IS IDENTITY AFFECTED BY OPPORTUNITIES TO COMMUNICATE WITH PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD?

When you want to communicate — share information — with someone, how do you do this? If the person you want to communicate with is a classmate, you might talk to each other in the hall between classes. If it's a grandparent in a different community, you might use the telephone or e-mail, or send a letter or greeting card. If it's a friend at another school, you might use instant messaging or send a text message on your cellphone.

Think about the methods you use for communicating with others and list the factors that influence the method you choose (e.g., it may depend on the reason for your message).

Communication Technology and Choices

Contemporary digital communication technologies — telephones, cellphones, computers, and the World Wide Web — expand the communication choices available and help you stay closely connected to friends and family, as well as to others in your community and beyond.

At one time, distance was a huge barrier to communication, but today's digital technology has nearly eliminated this barrier. Scientists with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in the United States, for example, run a program called NASA Quest. This program enables students around the world to participate with NASA scientists in live, interactive, real-time webcasts. Students can also share ideas about their own explorations, e-mail questions to the scientists, and receive answers.

Closer to home, you can establish an electronic network of people you can go to when you want to discuss or find out information about something. By chatting online with school friends, for example, you can develop a sense of belonging to your school community. By e-mailing an older sibling who is travelling in another country, you can stay in contact with family.

Digital technology also enables you to offer instant feedback on TV programs or the content of web sites. The CBC and other news broadcasters, for example, invite viewers to transmit digital photographs and even videos of newsworthy events. And web sites dedicated to specific issues may also ask for your response or support.

Connections like these help affirm people's membership in the world community. They provide opportunities for people to share their views with others beyond their local community.

Interview a parent, grandparent, or someone else from an earlier generation about how she or he

communicated with others as a teenager. Discuss how the range of choices has expanded. Does the person you interviewed think these technological changes have made a difference to your identity as a teenager? Do you agree? Explain your reasons.

FYI

In 2006, the cellphone was the fastest-selling consumer electronic device in the world. In 2005, more than 700 million cellphones were sold around the world. More camera-equipped cellphones are sold every year than digital cameras alone. And more cellphones with MP3 players are sold than MP3 players alone. Rapid advances in technology are also leading to more multi-purpose mobile devices, such as Internet-enabled cellphones and personal data assistants, or PDAs.



Figure 3-2 Many young people communicate with one another by cellphone. Why do you think cellphones are so popular among teenagers?

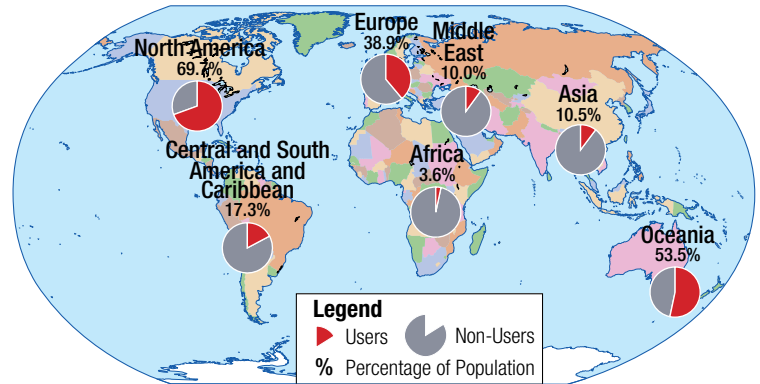
The Digital Divide

The first source of information many people choose is the Internet. But most of the world's people do not have Internet access. The gap that separates people who do — and do not — have access to up-to-date digital technology is often called the **digital divide**. Former U.S. president Jimmy Carter described the digital divide when he said, "Globalization, as defined by rich people like us, is a very nice thing . . . you are talking about the Internet, you are talking about cellphones, you are talking about computers. This doesn't affect two-thirds of the people of the world."

Even in countries like Canada, a digital divide exists. High-speed Internet access is not available in many rural areas. For some people, money is a barrier. They cannot afford Internet service. Language also presents a challenge. Few web sites, for example, are available in Aboriginal languages.

Examine the map on this page (Figure 3-3). Where is Internet use highest? Lowest? How might this affect people's identity?

Figure 3-3 Internet Use, 2007
(Percentage of Population)



MAKING CHOICES

MAKING CHOICES

MAKING CHOICES

NICHOLAS NEGROPONTE — ONE LAPTOP PER CHILD

Nicholas Negroponte and a group of computer experts set themselves a goal: to help people in developing countries cross the digital divide — by putting cheap, easy-to-maintain and -use laptop computers into the hands of students.

This group formed One Laptop per Child, a non-profit organization, and set about finding ways to build and sell a laptop computer for less than \$150.

By November 2006, they had created a prototype called the 2B1. The 2B1 can connect to the Internet through satellite links, cellular network connections, or long-range antennas. This will allow even many people in rural areas to connect to the Internet.

When the organization announced this development, five countries — Argentina, Brazil, Libya, Nigeria, and Thailand — expressed interest in equipping students with 2B1s. Special international loans will help with this. In addition, people in developed countries will be invited to donate to the project.

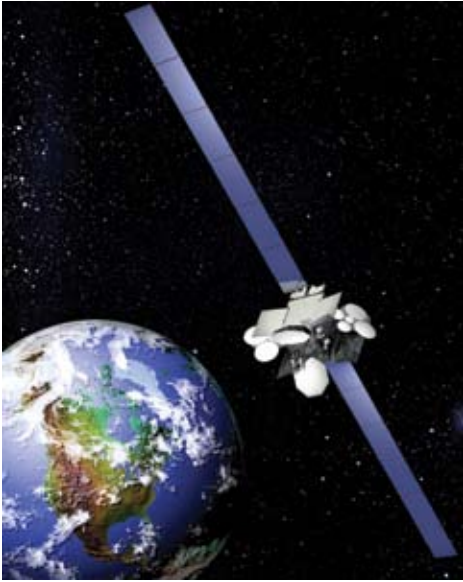


Figure 3-4 Because the display screen has fewer colour filters than normal, the 2B1 children's laptop uses just 2 watts of power compared with the 25 to 45 watts required to power a conventional laptop. Each 2B1 has its own antenna and video camera lens.

Explorations

1. Bill Gates, chair of Microsoft, criticized One Laptop per Child, saying it is "just taking what we do in the rich world and subsidizing its use in the developing world." What do you think he meant? Do you agree? Explain the reasons for your judgment.
2. Find out what has happened to One Laptop per Child. Write a short paragraph updating the information in this feature. Explain whether what you found out has changed the view you expressed in response to Question 1.

Technology at Work: The Aboriginal Peoples Television Network



In 1972, Canada launched a satellite called the Anik A1 — and initiated a new era of communication in Canada’s North and other remote areas. Over the following decades, satellite technology — which captures signals sent from transmitters on Earth and bounces them back to receivers in TV sets — improved greatly. In 1999, this technology helped the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network create a nationwide TV service for Aboriginal people.

Based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, APTN was the world’s first national public Aboriginal television network. Its goal is to create programs “by, for and about Aboriginal peoples” — and to share these programs with all Canadians.

Figure 3-5 The Anik A1 was the world’s first satellite designed for non-military uses. The Anik A1 and later generations of communication satellites, such as the one shown in this photograph, enabled people in Canada’s North and other remote areas to receive telephone and TV signals.

PROFILE

MARSHALL MCLUHAN LIVING IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

Edmonton-born Marshall McLuhan is respected around the world as one of the most influential thinkers of the 20th century. By the time he died in 1980, this media guru’s works had been analyzed by millions who shared his belief that people can understand the world only if they also understand how they are affected by various media.

McLuhan’s belief is reflected in his most famous saying: “The medium is the message.” This means that a message, whether on an advertising billboard or TV program, in a newspaper, or on a web site, is shaped and influenced by the way it is delivered to its audience — and this can be as important as the message itself. Reading about a world event in a print copy of the *Edmonton Journal* is different from watching live coverage of the event on CBC Newsworld, and this is different from going online to read breaking news about the event on the web site of *The Irish Times*.

McLuhan is also often credited with coining the term “global village” to symbolize the growing connections among people around the world. He predicted that as people communicated more quickly and more often, geographic and cultural distances would stop mattering as much. In *Understanding Media*, he wrote: “Since the inception of the telegraph and radio, the globe has contracted, spatially, into a single large village.”

In McLuhan’s global village, people can know, affect, and be affected by people on the other side of the world in much the same way as they can know, affect, and be affected by their neighbours across the street. But McLuhan didn’t think this knowledge would end all conflicts; rather, it would mean that people would no longer be citizens only of their local community, province, or country. They would also be citizens of the world.

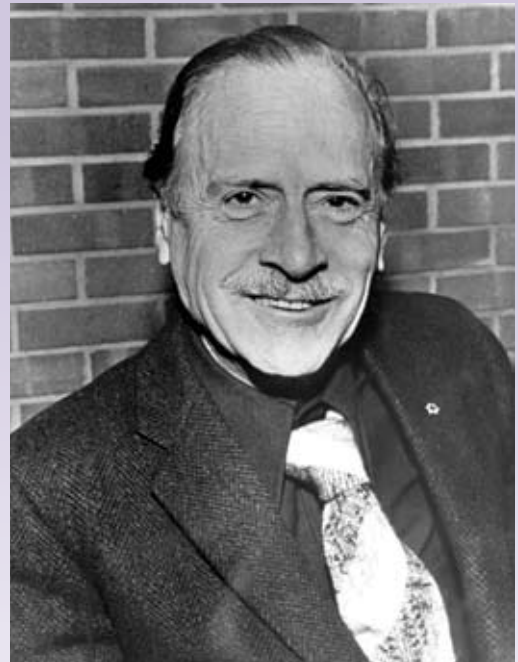


Figure 3-6 Long before the creation of the Internet and the World Wide Web, Marshall McLuhan studied the impact of print and electronic media on culture and identity.



Figure 3-7 Madeleine Allakariallak is the host and producer of *Contact*, a weekly live phone-in program that focuses on issues that are important to Aboriginal people in the 21st century. How might programs like this help Aboriginal people affirm their individual and collective identity? APTN also operates a web site where viewers can find out more about programs and check TV listings.



APTN produces about 70 per cent of its programming in Canada. The remaining 30 per cent is made up of programs and films from other countries. Many of these programs tell the stories of Indigenous people around the world. About 30 per cent of APTN programs are broadcast in Aboriginal languages such as Inuktitut, Cree, Inuinaqtuun, Ojibway, Mohawk, Dene, Gwich'in, Chipewyan, and Tlingit. About 55 per cent of the remaining programs are in English, and 15 per cent are in French.

APTN's entertainment and news programs focus on Aboriginal issues and current events. Series such as *Hank William's First Nation* and *Moccasin Flats* tell Aboriginal stories in Aboriginal voices and from Aboriginal points of view and perspectives. The network also broadcasts children's shows, documentaries, cooking shows, and educational programs.

Some programs feature traditional oral storytelling in a contemporary format. Community leaders and Elders speak in their own languages about environmental issues, land claims, and promoting their culture.

APTN's success has inspired Aboriginal peoples in other countries to launch their own television networks. In New Zealand, for example, Maori Television was launched in 2004.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

Based on what you have read so far, do you believe that the globalizing force of contemporary communication technologies is a positive or negative force in affirming and promoting people's individual and collective identity — or is it both?

Provide at least two examples to support your response. Conclude with a general statement summarizing how contemporary communication technologies affect your personal identity.

HOW IS DIVERSITY INFLUENCED BY THE MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES?

Whenever people from different cultures met and exchanged goods, some acculturation and accommodation always occurred. Languages, for example, have always borrowed terms from other languages, and English is no exception. Some language experts estimate that as many as 66 per cent of English words may be borrowed from other languages.

What is new today is the speed and complexity of the exchanges that take place — and for many people, the challenge is to balance the positive and negative effects of acculturation and accommodation. On the one hand, as people learn about different cultures, they come to respect and appreciate differences. On the other hand, a minority culture may be assimilated by a dominant culture — and the customs, traditions, and beliefs of the minority culture may disappear.

Diversity and Global Media Concentration

Just as media concentration and convergence is occurring in Canada, so is it also occurring around the world. Shashi Tharoor, a former United Nations official, told an international conference how this point was driven home to him: “Nowhere is globalization more apparent than in the media . . . Any doubt I might have had about the reach and influence of global mass communications was dispelled when I [was at a conference in Russia] and was approached by a Tibetan Buddhist monk in his saffron robes, thumping a cymbal and chanting his mantras, who paused to say, ‘I’ve seen you on BBC!’”

Like the Internet, mass media such as television and radio have the power to reach millions of people. These media can be forces that encourage cultural diversity — or forces that promote cultural homogenization.

Disney, for example, is an American transnational corporation that is tapping into the world market for children’s entertainment. The company either has or plans to set up channels in Taiwan, France, Italy, Germany, and the Middle East. And ESPN International is the most popular global sports broadcaster. To appeal to local tastes, it emphasizes soccer in South America, table tennis in Asia, and cricket in India.

Disney is one of nine transnational media corporations, many of them based in the United States, that dominate the global media. Others include Time Warner, Sony, News Corporation, Viacom, and Bertelsmann. These transnationals control all but one of the major American television networks, as well as many in Europe and Asia. They also control 85 per cent of the world music market, most satellite broadcasting, a great deal of magazine and book publishing, and most global cable broadcasting, as well as other activities.

When transnational media corporations such as Disney and ESPN set up channels in other countries, they often recruit local production crews and on-air personalities. Why do you suppose they do this? Is this an effective strategy for promoting diversity?

FYI

English has always borrowed words from other languages — and these words have sometimes taken a complicated route to make their way into English. Here are some examples:

caravan — Borrowed from French, which borrowed it from Persian

alarm — Borrowed from French, which borrowed it from Italian

veranda — Borrowed from Hindi, which borrowed it from Portuguese

tea — Borrowed from Dutch, which borrowed it from Chinese

CHECKBACK

You read about media concentration and convergence in Chapter 2.



Figure 3-8 ESPN adapts its local coverage to suit the interests of audiences around the world. Does this promote diversity or homogenization?

Diversity and the free flow of information

Critics of media concentration and convergence argue that it reduces competition and diversity of opinion. American author and columnist Jill Nelson, for example, has said that media convergence “may be good for business, but it’s bad for people and the free flow of information. In our lust for profits, we have forgotten democratic principles. This can only increase the public’s deep skepticism of the quality of the news.”

In Canada, critics support their arguments by pointing to a controversy involving CanWest Global Communications, one of the largest Canadian media companies. In late 2001, the company’s owners ordered most of their daily newspapers, including Montréal’s *Gazette*, the *Ottawa Citizen*, the *Edmonton Journal*, the *Calgary Herald*, and the *Victoria Times-Colonist*, to take the same editorial position, regardless of local and regional differences. Journalists who resisted were fired. The publisher of the *Ottawa Citizen*, for example, lost his job after the paper published an editorial that had not been approved by the CanWest head office. The incident sparked a national outcry, and CanWest later changed the policy.

Several years later, Gordon Fisher, a CanWest official, told a conference on control of Canada’s media: “The most odious ownership intentions would not change one facet of this great Western democratic society. There is just too much free information out there and our citizens are smart enough to go get it.”

Do you agree with Gordon Fisher’s statement? When you want more information about current events, what sources do you consult? Do these sources provide you with alternative points of view?

Al-Jazeera in North America

In 1996, satellite technology, cable networks, and the Internet enabled Al-Jazeera, an Arabic TV station, to begin broadcasting internationally from Qatar, a country in the Arabian Peninsula. Some people believe that Al-Jazeera provides nothing but **propaganda** — ideas and information spread for the purpose of achieving a specific goal. But others disagree. They believe that being exposed to a wide range of views is important.

So far, North American TV viewers cannot watch Al-Jazeera. In 2004, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, the agency that regulates broadcasting in Canada, ruled that Al-Jazeera could broadcast an English-language version of its programs in this country. But the CRTC also set strict conditions: cable operators who offered Al-Jazeera would, for example, be required to monitor its broadcasts and delete anything that broke Canada’s hate laws. Doing this would be difficult — and so far, no Canadian cable company has agreed to these terms.

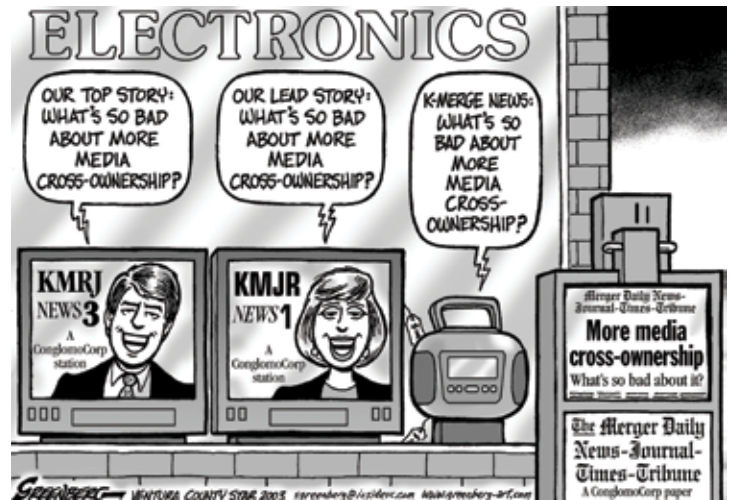



Figure 3-9 “Media cross-ownership” is another term for media convergence. What is the cartoonist’s opinion of media convergence? How does the cartoonist make his opinion clear? Note the name of the newspaper. How does the cartoonist use humour to make a point?

VOICES



At a time when issues in the Middle East, Iran, and Iraq are defining our world, why wouldn’t Al-Jazeera English be available on our television sets in Canada and the United States?

— Tony Burman, CBC’s chief news editor, in an editorial on the CBC web site

FYI

The conditions imposed on cable operators who might choose to broadcast Al-Jazeera are unusual. In all other cases, broadcast media are challenged only after someone believes they have broken the rules — not before.

Diversity and the Internet

Not everyone is in a position to benefit from global communication technologies. What are some reasons for this?

Indigenous peoples, for example, have had to struggle to make sure their many voices are heard on the World Wide Web. In 2003, representatives of governments, organizations, and Indigenous peoples from around the world met at the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva, Switzerland. They agreed that information and communication technologies can be a powerful force in improving everyone's quality of life and promoting dialogue among people, nations, and civilizations. But they also said that this effort requires co-operation and attention to the special needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups, as well as the preservation of the heritage and cultural legacy of Indigenous peoples.

VOICES



Cultural diversity has a key role to play in this era of the new economy . . . We must listen to one another and take the time to appreciate our respective cultures . . . And that respect must become the cornerstone of our relationships.

— Sheila Copps, former minister of Canadian Heritage, in a 2003 speech

POINTS OF VIEW

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IT stands for “information technology” — and the web site TakingITGlobal.org connects students around the world who are interested in getting involved in their community, both local and global. Tamoy, Richa, and Frederick are three of TIG’s 137 000 members. Tamoy is from Jamaica, Richa from India, and Frederick from Britain. When TIG asked these three students whether the organization has helped them achieve some of their goals, this is what they said.

Tamoy

Yes, TakingITGlobal can help me to achieve some of my goals; actually it has already. TIG has provided me with a forum to express my thoughts to young people . . . in over 100 countries worldwide. I am able to learn about other cultures, and I get to see what youth are doing in other countries. It has made me realize that young people everywhere are all the same: we share similar views, go through similar things. I learn about opportunities and I find old friends.

Richa

TakingITGlobal is a good place where people can interact and share their culture and inspirations. I always wanted to know people from different cultures and countries so that I could learn about them and share my views with them. TIG is helping me to accomplish my goal and to understand the world I live in.

Frederick

TIG helps achieve the major goal of spreading positive publicity about young people. In the “bad news” society we live in, where scandal rather than success hits the headlines, a tool like this is crucial to reversing the trend. Young people are continuously demonized by the media (at least where I live) and this can create low morale or confidence. Resources like TIG can help by going some way to restoring faith within the global youth population.



Figure 3-10 TakingITGlobal’s web site includes country-specific information, such as this page on Canada.

Explorations

1. On the TakingITGlobal web site, members were asked to describe an issue that matters to them — and to explain how they became aware and involved. How would you respond if you were asked to do the same thing?

Discuss your response with a partner, then write a one- to three-paragraph summary of your response.

2. If you wish to read more responses by TIG members, go to this web site and follow the links.
www.ExploringGlobalization.ca

In Canada, the commissioner of official languages produced a report stressing that, in a globalizing world, maintaining a strong French presence on the Internet requires continuous effort.

In Western Canada, media and services are overwhelmingly English, and Francophone communities are often widely separated. In Alberta, Francophone communities are taking steps to keep their culture strong. With the help of the Alberta government, they are, for example, digitizing their histories and posting them on the Internet. French-language services are also listed on web sites. What do you think is the most significant way measures like these help Alberta Francophones affirm and promote their identity?



Figure 3-11 Cartoonist Mike Keefe is making a comment on one possible result of contemporary communication technology. Make up a title for this cartoon. What view of technology does your title imply?

Techno-Isolation

Think about how current communication technologies can enable you to create your own world. Your MP3 player, for example, gives you a customized soundtrack and blocks out the rest of the world. You can go online to play games with people on the other side of the world. At lunch, you can talk or send text messages on your cellphone while sitting at a table surrounded by people you are not communicating with.

Though some people believe that technology increases connections among people, others argue that it actually promotes social isolation by encouraging people to become “high-tech hermits.” Technology enables people to pursue their own interests, but doing this can reduce their sense of community, psychotherapist Tina Tessina told the *Edmonton Journal*. “People don’t automatically have the same cultural events to talk about,” she said. “We have so much choice that people at the water cooler haven’t all seen the same thing, read the same book or heard the same news.”

At the same time, those who deny that technology is isolating say it can result in interesting new ways of interacting. *Wired* magazine, for example, reported that in New York, owners of MP3 players listen to one another’s music. Strangers meeting on the street listen to each other’s selections, creating different kinds of social connections.

REFLECT AND RESPOND

In your notebook or on a sheet of paper, create a continuum like the following. Then assess the effects of technology on cultural diversity. If you think the effects are completely positive, place an X at the positive end of the continuum. If you think they are completely negative, place an X at the negative end. And if you think the effects are somewhere in between, place an X at the appropriate spot between positive and negative.

Compare your assessment with that of a partner and explain the reasons for your assessment. When you finish this discussion, decide whether you wish to change your assessment. If so, mark the change on your continuum and make a point-form note about the comment that was most effective in changing your mind.

Effects of Technology on Cultural Diversity

Negative

Positive

HOW IS IDENTITY AFFECTED BY MEDIA COVERAGE OF WORLD EVENTS?

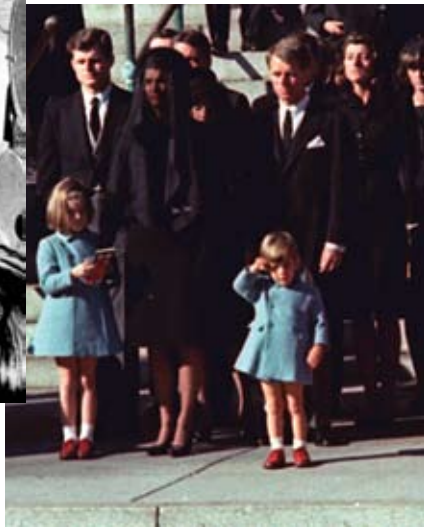


Figure 3-12 Coverage of the 1963 assassination of John F. Kennedy in Dallas, Texas, changed the way the media covered world events. The photograph on the left shows Lee Harvey Oswald, the alleged assassin, just before he was murdered by Jack Ruby — as TV cameras rolled. The photo on the right shows Kennedy's young son saluting his father's coffin as the funeral procession passes.

On Friday, November 22, 1963, news of the assassination of American president John F. Kennedy flashed around the world. In many countries, including Canada, TV stations suspended regular programming to broadcast events as they unfolded. American TV networks issued a bulletin at 1:45 that afternoon and soon started coverage that continued without commercial interruption for the next three days. During that time, an estimated 96 per cent of all American TV sets were on for an average of 31 hours.

Millions of people in other countries also watched TV coverage of the story.

Many people who were alive in 1963 remember exactly where they were when they heard the news — and many were riveted to the live coverage as it unfolded through the weekend. Why do you suppose so many people gathered in front of TV sets that weekend?

The Kennedy assassination was one of the first examples of the kind of TV coverage people in Western countries have come to expect when momentous events occur. Since then, people who have access to communication technologies have become accustomed to witnessing events — natural disasters, political unrest, sporting events, and cultural festivals — in real time as they happen all over the world.

September 11, 2001 — The World Watches

On September 11, 2001, four passenger airliners were hijacked in the United States. Two were flown into the World Trade Center in New York City, the third crashed into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and the fourth crashed in a field in Pennsylvania. More than 3000 people were killed in the attacks.

As a result of the attacks, U.S. president George W. Bush declared “war on terror.” He vowed to track down Osama bin Laden and members of al-Qaeda, the extremist network that had been declared responsible for the attacks.

On the hijacked planes, some passengers and crew members made cellphone calls to report what was happening. After the planes crashed into the World Trade Center, many people in the buildings used their cellphones to call loved ones and some used them to send farewell messages to their families.

A few early spectators videotaped events on cellphones or videocams and transmitted the images to TV stations. News crews arrived at the same time as emergency medical crews, firefighters, and police. By the time the second plane flew into the south tower of the World Trade Center, CNN was already broadcasting live — and horrified viewers watched the plane hit the building.



Figure 3-13 On September 11, 2001, two hijacked airplanes flew into the World Trade Center in New York City, causing the towers to burn and collapse. Have you seen media coverage of this event? If so, how did watching this coverage affect your identity?

The world responds

After the attacks of September 11, 2001, many people around the world sympathized — and identified — with the United States and other countries whose citizens had died on that day. In Turkey and Israel, flags on government buildings were lowered to half-mast. In Bangladesh, people held a candlelight vigil. In Moscow, children left flowers outside the U.S. Embassy. In Gander, Newfoundland, people took in airline passengers who were stranded when all air traffic over the U.S. was halted after the attacks. Firefighters and police officers from Canadian cities went to New York to help with recovery efforts.

But not everyone responded this way. CNN reported that some people in some countries took to the streets to applaud the attacks. A year later, a survey of people in six European countries found that 55 per cent of those polled agreed that American foreign policy in the Middle East had contributed to the attacks.

Dealing with the backlash

In some Western countries, people of Middle Eastern heritage — or people who looked as if they might be from the Middle East — were harassed. Mosques were firebombed in the U.S, France, Australia, and Canada, and some Muslims were mistakenly arrested for engaging in “terrorist” activities.

The situation became so serious that, in 2005, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights adopted a resolution calling on Western countries to combat defamation campaigns against Islam and Muslims. Kofi Annan, who was secretary-general of the United Nations at the time, told delegates at a seminar titled *Confronting Islamophobia: Education for Tolerance and Understanding*: “Since the September 11 attacks on the United States, many Muslims, particularly in the West, have found themselves the objects of suspicion, harassment, and discrimination. Too many people see Islam as a monolith and as intrinsically opposed to the West. Caricature remains widespread and the gulf of ignorance is dangerously deep.”


In the Western media, some news editors began to think carefully about how their choice of words influenced readers and viewers — and to examine how they used words such as “terrorist,” “freedom fighter,” “militant,” and “insurgent.”

In 2002, Maher Arar, a Syrian-born Canadian citizen, was unjustly arrested in the United States and deported to Syria, where he was held for a year and tortured before he was allowed to return to Canada. Here are the headlines that appeared when two different Canadian news sources reported Arar’s deportation:

U.S. deports respected Canadian to Syria

United States deports suspected terrorist to Syria


The two headlines are almost the same. Which words are different? What bias do these words represent? How might these headlines have influenced readers’ points of view on Arar’s identity?



VOICES

On September 11th, great sorrow came to our country. And from that sorrow has come great resolve. Today, we are a nation awakened to the evil of terrorism, and determined to destroy it. That work began the moment we were attacked; and it will continue until justice is delivered.

— U.S. president George W. Bush, in a speech on October 11, 2001



VOICES

While I was looking at these destroyed towers in Lebanon, it sparked in my mind that the tyrant should be punished with the same and that we should destroy towers in America, so that it tastes what we taste and would be deterred from killing our children and women.

— Osama bin Laden, head of al-Qaeda, explaining how U.S. support of the 1982 Israeli bombing of Lebanon inspired him to seek revenge.

Web Connection

To find out more about the media debate over the use of words such as “terrorist,” “freedom fighter,” “militant,” and “insurgent,” go to this web site and follow the links.

www.ExploringGlobalization.ca

ASSESSING THE AUTHORITY AND VALIDITY OF INTERNET INFORMATION

The Internet provides greater access to information than ever before. But so much material is available that the challenge is often to decide which information is accurate and useful.

Suppose you are accessing the Internet to find a timeline of events that occurred on September 11, 2001. The following steps can help you assess the authority and validity of the information you find. Similar steps can help whenever you need to evaluate information on the Internet.

Steps to Assessing the Authority and Validity of Internet Information

Step 1: Decide on assessment criteria

With a partner, examine the questions on the Internet information checklist on this page. Discuss how each question can help you assess the authority and validity of Internet information.

Step 2: Practise responding to criteria

On a sheet of paper, in your notebook, or in a computer file, create a chart like the one on this page. A portion of a CNN web page that shows a timeline of events on 9/11 appears on the facing page. With your partner, examine this web page and use the information you find to fill in the answers on your chart. To get you started, some sample answers are provided.

When you finish, discuss your answers with a small group or the class. Are you missing any important answers? What is your overall assessment of the authority and validity of the information? You may wish to express your rating on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = not authoritative at all; 10 = highly authoritative).

Step 3: Choose and assess information on another web site

Go online, choose another web site, and assess it in the same way. This web site may be one that you plan to use when you complete the challenge for this related issue — or it may be another web site that includes information on globalization.

Internet Information Checklist	
Web Site	
Name and URL	CNN.com/U.S. — September 11: Chronology of terror http://archives.cnn.com/2001/US/09/11/chronology.attack/
Authority	
Is the source of the information identified?	Yes. CNN, or Cable News Network — at top and bottom of page.
Does the creator have knowledge of the subject?	Yes. CNN reporters were at the scene.
Are qualifications provided?	No qualifications provided.
Does the URL provide clues to help you assess the information?	
Objectivity	
Does the site state facts or opinion?	
Do you suspect bias? If so, why?	
Is the source of the information clearly stated?	
Does the site include advertising? If so, does this affect the reliability of the information?	
Comprehensiveness	
Does the content meet your research needs?	
Does the content cover a specific period or an aspect of the topic — or is it comprehensive?	
Do you need to find additional sources to add to the information provided?	
Currency	
If it matters to your topic, has the site been updated recently?	
Links	
Are links to other sources provided?	
Do the links work?	
Are they useful?	

RESEARCH TIP

When examining a web site, the URL (uniform resource locator, or web address) can provide clues that help you assess the authority of the information. The following suffixes, for example, provide information about the sponsor of the site. The country of origin — as well as other information — may also be included in the URL (e.g., the suffix .ca tells you that the web site is Canadian).

- .edu — educational or research material
- .gov — government resources
- .com — commercial product or commercially sponsored site
- .org — organization, either non-profit or for-profit

Address: <http://archives.cnn.com/2001/US/09/11/chronology.attack/>

Live Home Page Apple Apple Support Apple Store .Mac Mac OS X Microsoft MacTopia Office for Macintosh MSN

CNN.com / U.S.

SEARCH GO

MAIN PAGE
WORLD
U.S.
WEATHER
BUSINESS
SPORTS
POLITICS
LAW
SCI-TECH
SPACE
HEALTH
ENTERTAINMENT
TRAVEL
EDUCATION
CAREER
IN-DEPTH

QUICK NEWS
LOCAL
COMMUNITY
MULTIMEDIA
E-MAIL SERVICES
CNN ON PDA
ABOUT US

CNN TV
what's on
show transcripts
CNN Headline News
CNN International
askCNN

September 11: Chronology of terror

September 12, 2001 Posted: 12:27 PM EDT (1627 GMT)

8:45 a.m. (all times are EDT): A hijacked passenger jet, American Airlines Flight 11 out of Boston, Massachusetts, crashes into the north tower of the World Trade Center, tearing a gaping hole in the building and setting it afire.

9:03 a.m.: A second hijacked airliner, United Airlines Flight 175 from Boston, crashes into the south tower of the World Trade Center and explodes. Both buildings are burning.

9:17 a.m.: The Federal Aviation Administration shuts down all New York City area airports.

9:21 a.m.: The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey orders all bridges and tunnels in the New York area closed.

9:30 a.m.: President Bush, speaking in Sarasota, Florida, says the country has suffered an "apparent terrorist attack."

9:40 a.m.: The FAA halts all flight operations at U.S. airports, the first time in U.S. history that air traffic nationwide has been halted.

9:43 a.m.: American Airlines Flight 77 crashes into the Pentagon, sending up a huge plume of smoke. Evacuation begins immediately.

9:45 a.m.: The White House evacuates.

9:57 a.m.: Bush departs from Florida.

10:05 a.m.: The south tower of the World Trade Center collapses, plummeting into the streets below. A massive cloud of dust and debris forms and slowly drifts away from the building.

10:08 a.m.: Secret Service agents armed with automatic rifles are deployed into Lafayette Park across from the White House.

10:10 a.m.: A portion of the Pentagon collapses.

10:10 a.m.: United Airlines Flight 93, also

10:56 p.m.: CNN's Zahn reports that New York City police believe there are people alive in buildings near the World Trade Center.

11:54 p.m.: CNN Washington Bureau Chief Frank Sesno reports that a government official told him there was an open microphone on one of the hijacked planes and that sounds of discussion and "duress" were heard. Sesno also reports a source says law enforcement has "credible" information and leads and is confident about the investigation.

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URL

Photo credit

WAR AGAINST TERROR

CNN.COM SPECIAL REPORT

CNN NewsPass Video

- Agencies reportedly got hijack tips in 1998

MORE STORIES

- Intelligence intercept led to Buffalo suspects
- Report cites warnings before 9/11

EXTRA INFORMATION

- Timeline: Who Knew What and When?
- Interactive: Terror Investigation
- Terror Warnings System
- Most wanted terrorists
- What looks suspicious?
- In-Depth: America Remembers
- In-Depth: Terror on Tape
- In-Depth: How prepared is your city?

RESOURCES

- On the Scene: Barbara Starr: Al Qaeda hunt expands?
- On the Scene: Peter Bergen: Getting al Qaeda to talk

Links

Copyright information

Summing Up

When you finish answering the questions about the web site you have chosen, decide whether you have enough information to assess the authority and validity of the information on the site. Rate the authority and validity of the information on a scale of 1 to 10, just as you did earlier. Be prepared to defend your rating.

Web Connection

Make Poverty History is a coalition of non-profit organizations around the world. To find out more about the coalition's campaigns and members, and to see video footage of the Live 8 concerts and of children in Africa, go to this web site and follow the links.

www.ExploringGlobalization.ca

Make Poverty History and Live 8

On July 2, 2005, a series of concerts organized by Make Poverty History occurred in cities around the world. Satellite links connected the concerts as they were happening in Tokyo; Johannesburg; Moscow; Berlin; Rome; Paris; London; the Eden Project in Cornwall, England; Philadelphia — and Barrie, Ontario. Hundreds of international artists performed at the concerts.

Make Poverty History, a coalition of non-profit organizations around the world, is dedicated to eradicating poverty. The concerts were held to increase awareness of global poverty and influence world leaders to take action to end poverty — to make it history.

The concerts took place in July because officials from the world's eight leading industrial countries — the Group of Eight, or G8 — were meeting in Edinburgh, Scotland, at the time. The concerts were called Live 8 as a play on "G8." Leaders of the G8 countries, which include Canada, meet every year to discuss international issues. The Live 8 organizers asked the G8 leaders to ensure justice in trade, cancel debt in the poorest countries of the world, and deliver more and better aid to people in those countries.

About three billion people around the world participated in the concerts through radio, television, and Internet communication links. During the concerts, more than 26.4 million people sent text messages to support the goal of making poverty history.



Figure 3-14 In London, England, more than 200 000 people attended a Live 8 concert that was broadcast live around the world. What contemporary communication technologies made this broadcast possible?

Missing voices

Nelson Mandela spoke to concert-goers in London, but only two African-born performers — Youssou N'Dour from Senegal and Dave Matthews from South Africa — were scheduled to appear at the main concerts.

Some critics wondered what this said about the organizers' attitude to Africans. British singer Damon Albarn, for example, said that failing to include black artists at the main concert venues undermined the whole project: "If you are holding a party on behalf of people, then surely you don't shut the door on them."

In response to the criticisms, African entertainers organized Africa Calling, a concert in Cornwall, England, though this event was not televised. Angélique Kidjo, a Beninese performer who appeared at Africa Calling, said that she was not concerned about who was performing and who was getting the biggest share of media coverage: "Why are we having this controversy? They are big rock and roll stars and without them we would not have the media interest. What is important is that we all work together against poverty."

Do you agree with Kidjo's point of view? Without the international celebrities, would Live 8 have captured international media interest? What does this say about media responses to world problems and about celebrity status in the media?



Figure 3-15 Angélique Kidjo is a singer and songwriter who was born in the West African country of Benin. In her view, music crosses international boundaries. She believes that music is "really the thread of the memory of mankind."

Stories That Are Told — and Those That Are Not

Though some disasters capture media attention and spark a generous response from people around the world, others do not.

On December 26, 2004, for example, an earthquake in the Indian Ocean created a tsunami that caught the attention of the media — and the world. By the end of that day, more than 150 000 people in 11 countries were dead or missing and millions more were homeless.

People around the world responded by offering money, supplies, and help of all kinds. The money donated to help people cope with this one disaster exceeded the money that some groups had raised during fundraising campaigns that had lasted for years.

In 2004, for example, Médecins sans frontières — Doctors without Borders — had campaigned in Canada to raise money for the crisis-torn Darfur region of Sudan. There, 50 000 people had been killed and 1.5 million had been driven from their homes. MSF's campaign raised \$350 000, much less than expected. But in less than three weeks after the tsunami, MSF took in \$5 million — without making any requests for aid.

Untold stories

According to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the disasters that attract the most coverage are those that are unusual but can be explained. “Editors sort stories by death tolls,” a Red Cross report said. Stories about continuing tragedies that don't have clear causes or solutions attract less media attention. Think about the disasters making news right now. Do you agree with this assessment?

The Red Cross analyzed 200 English-language newspapers worldwide and found that “the tsunami generated more column inches in six weeks than the world's top 10 ‘forgotten’ emergencies combined over the previous year.” They also found that by February 2005, people around the world had donated the equivalent of \$500 U.S. for each person affected by the tsunami, compared with just 50 cents U.S. for each person affected by a war that had been raging in Uganda for 18 years.



Figure 3-16 This cartoon was created by Patrick Chappatte and appeared 14 days after the tsunami of December 26, 2004. What is the cartoonist saying about how media coverage affects aid to disaster victims? What does his comment say about the people receiving the media messages?

VOICES



Media coverage of the 26 December tsunami dominated headlines worldwide well into January — much longer than any other disaster in modern history. After the tsunami came a metaphorical tidal wave of donations. Aid workers worried that the tsunami would divert donor money and media attention away from the world's “hidden disasters.”

— International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

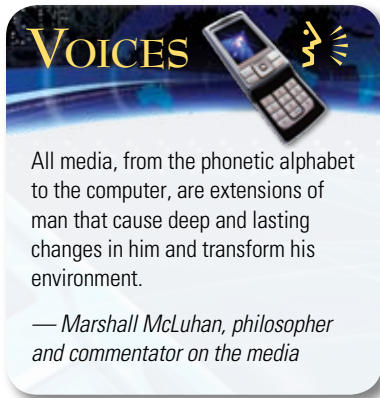
REFLECT AND RESPOND

What is one world event that recently captured media attention? Why do you think the media selected this event as a focus of attention? Is this the kind of event that you think the media should focus on? Explain your response.

Decide on a world event that you think merits more media coverage. Then use authoritative and valid print or online sources to find out more about it.

Create a script for a one-minute radio or TV report that presents the story from a point of view that you think people should consider. Alternatively, you might create an editorial cartoon to convey this point of view and to convince people of its value.

Ask a classmate to respond to your message. Is the response the one you expected? Explain.



HOW IS DIVERSITY AFFECTED BY THE DOMINANCE OF AMERICAN MEDIA?

Though media coverage of world events can shape the way you view the events and the people involved, **pop culture** also shapes your point of view — and your identity. “Pop culture” is short for “popular culture” and means the culture of the people. This term often refers to current cultural trends that are spread by commercial mass media.

Many people equate “pop culture” with “American culture” because they believe the commercial mass media are controlled by American transnational corporations, such as Disney and Time Warner. Critics of globalization say the American media giants have the resources to dictate what becomes popular around the world. In the process, other voices and ideas may be lost.

Figure 3-17 lists the movies that made the most money from global ticket sales in 2006. Which companies made these movies? How many of these companies are among the largest transnational media corporations that you read about earlier in this chapter? What difference do you think it makes to global cultural diversity that these media companies — and their movies — are American?

Figure 3-17 Top Movies of 2006 (Box-Office Receipts)

Rating	Title	World Box Office Receipts (U.S. Dollars)	Company and Country
1	<i>Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest</i>	\$1 065 396 812	Walt Disney Co. (U.S.)
2	<i>Cars</i>	\$461 801 982	Walt Disney Co. (U.S.)
3	<i>X-Men: The Last Stand</i>	\$458 751 448	20th Century Fox, owned by News Corporation (U.S.)
4	<i>Superman Returns</i>	\$391 081 192	Warner Brothers, owned by Time Warner (U.S.)
5	<i>Happy Feet</i>	\$180 594 614	Warner Brothers, owned by Time Warner (U.S.)



Figure 3-18 Among the top pop-culture advertising symbols of the 20th century were the Energizer Bunny, Ronald McDonald, and Tony the Tiger. Which companies own these symbols? Where are the head offices of these companies located?

Pop Culture and Global Media

Pop culture has always been part of human cultural activities. Folktales and songs, for example, gave people a sense of collective identity and of belonging to the group that shared the stories and songs. But in the past, these groups were often relatively small.

Today, contemporary mass media and communication technologies mean that many more people can share in various aspects of pop culture, such as TV shows, trendy products, fashion, music, movies, and even information about celebrities.

When you take part in activities associated with pop culture — whether you are buying a particular brand of MP3 player or listening to the music of a particular individual or group — it influences your values and beliefs and helps define your identity. At the same time, your choices help define what becomes “pop culture.” What TV shows or music, for example, do you and your friends share and enjoy? Where do these originate? How does this sharing affect your sense of collective identity? How does your sharing contribute to the creation of a global pop culture?

Global media and communication technologies enable the creators of pop culture to sell their products anywhere in the world, and this has led to the **universalization** of pop culture. Everyone with access to a TV or movie screen or a computer with an Internet connection can share in cultural events and trends. But some people warn that this universalization leads to cultural homogenization because so much of pop culture is produced in the United States and exported around the world.

Sesame Street in the global village

Perhaps you watched the television program *Sesame Street* when you were young. This show was produced by the Children's Television Network — now the Sesame Workshop — for broadcast on the American TV network NBC.

From the beginning, one of *Sesame Street*'s main themes has been respect for cultural diversity. Because of this emphasis and the show's multicultural cast, some U.S. television stations would not run *Sesame Street* when it was first produced in 1969. But in the years since, Big Bird and the other characters have become well-known elements of pop culture in North America and around the world. They appear not only on the TV show, but also in books, games, puzzles, and toys. How do you think this popular, long-running program has affected the identity of young people in the U.S. and Canada? How has it influenced acceptance of diversity?



Figure 3-19 *Sesame Street*'s Big Bird is shown here with children in a kindergarten classroom in Shanghai. Since 1997, the popular American television show has been co-produced in Mandarin for a Chinese audience.

Sesame Street and hybridization

Over the years, *Sesame Street* has become a global enterprise. In 2005, it was seen by children in 120 countries. Sometimes the shows are dubbed into local languages; other times, new shows are co-produced by local media companies. The result is a **hybridization** that combines elements of American culture with those of the country where the show is co-produced.

Hybridization not only mixes elements of different cultures, but it can also create new cultural products that enable people to connect with one another in new ways. In China, for example, local experts in child development, education, and media helped co-producers re-present the program — called *Zhima Jie* in Mandarin — for the Chinese market. The original *Zhima Jie* series was sponsored by General Electric, one of the world's largest corporations and owner of NBC, Universal Pictures, and many U.S. TV stations.

When *Sesame Street* episodes are shown in countries outside the U.S., they are produced under licensing agreements that return money to Sesame Workshop's New York headquarters. Merchandising arrangements for *Sesame Street* books and toys bring in even more revenue.

In many countries, the response to *Sesame Street* has been positive. According to *China Daily*, a Beijing newspaper with a circulation of three million, "Exporting American culture often is greeted with skepticism or even hostility, yet *Sesame Street* seems to find a warm reception wherever it goes." This positive reception may be in part because local co-producers decide which social issues to highlight on their shows. In South Africa, for example, one out of nine children is infected with the AIDS virus — so the South African version of the show includes Kami, a muppet who is HIV-positive.



Figure 3-20 These illustrations show the *Sesame Street* sign as it appears in Kosovo, South Africa, and Bangladesh.



Figure 3-21 Anime characters are so much a part of the pop culture of Japan that fans adopt the costumes of their favourite characters.

Cultural Diversity beyond the American Media

Around the world, various countries have developed their own media industries — sometimes in response to the American influence on pop culture. Modern communication technologies have given creators of these cultural products the opportunity to promote their culture and identity at home and abroad.

Anime and manga

In the early 21st century, some of the most universally popular products of pop culture came from a form of cartooning and animation from Japan: manga, a bold, colourful cartoon style based on Japanese graphic novels; and anime, animated cartoons based on manga.

Manga books and anime films first became popular in Japan and throughout Asia, where some stores specialize in anime videos and manga books. Many of the books tell action stories that have been extended into series. On TV, anime series earn very high ratings and have become symbols of Japanese identity. One popular anime character — Doraemon — has been around since 1969 and has appeared on Japanese postage stamps and even as a cursor on Sony computer screens.

Anime characters such as Pokémon, Goku, and Sailor Moon have also become part of the global cultural landscape — so much so that one anime film won an Academy Award in 2002. In Canada, some book and video stores devote entire sections to manga novels and anime productions. Young people join anime clubs at local public libraries, where librarians can't keep up with the demand for manga graphic books.

Some critics have suggested that manga and anime are so popular because they reflect values that are held by many people, not only in Japan, but also around the world. These art forms started after World War II, when the Japanese people were struggling to overcome the losses suffered during the war. According to Joanne Bernardi, who teaches Japanese film and media at the University of Rochester, the physical, economic, and emotional devastation people experienced as a result of the war helped establish the themes of manga books and anime films: “good versus evil, the conflict between human-made technology and nature, even the basic questions of the meaning of humanity.”

What do Bernardi's comments say about manga and anime culture and values? In what ways might these products influence diversity and shape identity? To what extent do they reflect diversity — and a collective identity — among fans of anime and manga?



Figure 3-22 In 2002, the anime film *Spirited Away* by Hayao Miyazaki won Hollywood's Academy Award for best animated feature. The version shown in North America, which was released by Disney, was dubbed into English.



Figure 3-23 Canadian teenagers are snapping up manga books at a rate that has surprised booksellers and librarians. Why do you think manga books appeal to teenage readers?

Korean pop culture

When the Korean film and television industries were overpowered by American media in the late 1980s, two events impressed Koreans with the need to promote their culture. First, the Korean film *Sopyonje*, about a family that performs traditional music, renewed interest in Korean folk culture. Then, a government report recommended renewing the country's cultural industries to improve the economy.

Korea introduced the most restrictive quota of any country that imports American entertainment. To protect Korean culture, 40 per cent — 146 days — of the country's screen time is reserved for Korean-made films. Koreans also imitated the American media system. Large conglomerates such as Samsung, Hyundai, and Daewoo expanded into the media sector. The result is that Korean TV shows have become popular not only in Korea but also in China, Singapore, Vietnam, and Indonesia.

In the late 1990s, a regional TV station, Channel V, began featuring Korean music videos, creating a strong K-pop fan base in Asia. Performers like Rain and BoA attracted large audiences. Some Korean stars — such as Danny Im, also known as Taebin, and Micky Yoochun, of the group TVXQ — grew up in the United States. Their music blends American and Korean traditions.



Figure 3-24 Korean pop musicians like BoA have a huge fan base. Like other pop fans around the world, their followers imitate the musician's hair and clothing styles, makeup, and jewelry. Why do fans do this?

Ideas

How does what you choose to watch on television affect your point of view on diversity?

The students responding to this question are Katerina, who lives in St. Albert and whose grandparents emigrated from Ukraine in 1948; Deven, who was born in India but is now a Canadian who lives in Calgary; and Gord, a member of the Beaver First Nation near High Level.

I watch Canadian newscasts, but sometimes I switch to CNN or BBC World just to compare. You can really see a difference in the things they choose to cover and the way they cover things . . . their approach. Quite often, things that are big issues in Canada are not even mentioned on American and British newscasts, and vice versa. So switching around gives me different views on what's important — and I think this is good.



Katerina

I watch lots of American TV shows and movies, and I also watch sports — well, soccer, actually — on the sports channel. Canadian programs? Not so much, but sometimes. Some of the comedy stuff is pretty good. My parents like to watch Indian movies on DVD, and I sometimes watch with them. I suppose you could say that I'm influenced by three cultures — but this gives me more to enjoy.



Deven

I watch APTN sometimes, and I like shows like Hank William's First Nation. It's pretty good. But I also watch a lot of American shows, especially reality shows. But they hardly ever show Aboriginal people. Sometimes, I think I should write a letter. Where are the Aboriginal people? How come I only see them on APTN? Where's the diversity?



Gord

Your Turn

How would you respond to the question Katerina, Deven, and Gord are answering? What choices do you make in your television viewing? Why do you make those choices? How does what you watch influence your views of people who are different from you? How do your choices shape your identity?

1. Everyone has a tendency to want what psychologists describe as personal space. This is the amount of physical space people feel comfortable about placing between themselves and others in various situations. When you are with friends or family, for example, you may feel quite comfortable if they are close to you and even touch you at times. But on an elevator, you may feel uncomfortable if people are squeezed in tightly.

Your personal space includes audio space — the amount of sound that intrudes on you. Joshua Quittner, an information technology writer for *Time* magazine, wrote the following:

We don't need better cellphone technology from Finland, or Lapland, or anywhere else. What we need is anti-cellphone technology, to take back the streets (and passenger trains and restaurants and theaters and airplanes) from the cell-people before we all go crazy.

Work with a partner to create a poster about the rights and responsibilities of cellphone use; for example, cellphone users have a right to use this communication tool, but they also have a responsibility to respect the personal space of others. Join four or five other pairs to create a display of your posters.

2. Whose news are you watching, reading, and listening to? The list of those who shape and deliver the news is long — and not always obvious. There is the editor who cuts and assembles the images for TV reports, and the photo editor

who decides which photographs to print with a newspaper story. Then there are the reporters, who decide whose voices will be heard in stories. There are also advertisers, whom media owners must please. And in some countries, government policy can dictate the point of view a story must take.

Watch a TV news report or read a news story in a newspaper or online. List at least five people who may have had a hand in shaping the report — and think about how each may have influenced what you saw or read. Was the photo editor, for example, sending a subtle message by choosing a flattering — or unflattering — picture of someone involved in the story?

Then, rewrite the main idea of the news story from the point of view of one of the other people involved in shaping the story. How might this change the story?

How does what's reported as news affect your view of global events and your identity? Explain your response.

3. According to Marshall McLuhan, all media affect people's identity in some way. Think about five messages you have recently received via the media: TV, radio, a magazine, a billboard, a movie, or another source. Consider how each message might be trying to influence or change you — to manage your worldview in some way — and how these influences might be affecting who you are: your identity.

Create a chart like the one shown and use it to assess each of the five messages you selected. A sample response has been filled in for you.

Medium and Item	Main Message	Source Country	How does it try to influence me?	How is its message tied to culture and identity?
Movie shown on TV: <u>How the Grinch Stole Christmas</u>	Happiness comes not from having more "things" but from appreciating the value of what you do have.	USA	The Grinch's identity changes from evil to good when he learns that "things" aren't the basis of happiness. But at the same time, 30 commercials were shown during the show.	It shows that friendliness and respect are the basis of a positive view of oneself. But the commercials seemed to contradict this message by telling me that to be happy, I must buy the things advertised.

4. Zara Houshmand is an Iranian-born American writer who wrote the poem on this page soon after the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States. At the time, the news was full of accusations against various Muslim groups — and “Another Day and Counting” expressed Houshmand’s feelings about the media messages that were affecting her identity.
- Select five words and phrases Houshmand uses to express her emotional state. Describe her emotional state in your own words.
 - After the twin towers of the World Trade Center collapsed, dust filled the air for days. In the second stanza, Houshmand uses the word “dust” five times. Explain the meaning contained in this word each time she uses it.
 - In the final stanza, Houshmand wrote: “The tiny paper stars and stripes seem far away.” Explain what this sentence means. How does it reflect her mixed emotions about her identity as an Iranian and as an American?
 - Reread the final sentence of the poem. It starts, “The waitress smiles . . .” Explain how this sentence sums up Houshmand’s mixed feelings about what has happened — and what is happening.

Another Day and Counting

by Zara Houshmand

It’s routine now:
I drive my son to school,
the sun just breaking through Pacific mist.
Driving home, I listen to the news
and quietly cry.

My son won’t listen anymore:
“All opinions, hot air. Call me when they
find some facts.”
Proud and fragile privilege of youth:
demand the truth.

The sky recedes, ashamed.
What passes now for truth on this cold ball?
The sky is pink with shame
beyond the concrete ribbons where commuters crawl.
What’s in that microscopic dust
that bends our light to post-card pinks?
Dust of concrete hopes exploded,
dust of homes of sun-baked brick,
complex chains of human dust
and dust of promises to youth.

Tonight my cheeseburger arrives
with a flag poked proudly in the bun.
The tiny paper stars and stripes seem far away,
victory through the wrong end of the telescope,
moon-landing on the circle of my plate.
The waitress smiles broadly,
but the food tastes bad,
or maybe I’ve just lost my appetite.

Think about Your Challenge

Review the challenge for this related issue: a presentation that explains your position on the extent to which globalization should shape identity.

Think about the material in this chapter and the activities you completed as you progressed through it. Note ideas that could be useful as you prepare your presentation. After reading this chapter, do you wish to add to the list of criteria and critical questions you created to help evaluate the data you are putting together? Or do you wish to change any of the questions?