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The Global Youth Media Council: Young People Speaking and Learning about Media Reform

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Abstract

The 5th World Summit on Media for Children and Youth held in Karlstad, Sweden in June 2010 provided a unique media literacy experience for approximately thirty young people from diverse backgrounds through participation in the Global Youth Media Council. This article focuses on the Summit's aim to give young people a 'voice' through intercultural dialogue about media reform. The accounts of four young Australians are discussed in order to consider how successful the Summit was in achieving this goal. The article concludes by making recommendations for future international media literacy conferences involving young people. It also advocates for the expansion of the Global Youth Media Council concept as a grass roots movement to involve more young people in discussions about media reform.

Keywords: *global, media, intercultural, youth, development, youth media, advocacy, media reform, World Summit, children*

Introduction

The 5th World Summit on Media for Children and Youth held in Karlstad, Sweden in June 2010 provided a unique media literacy experience for approximately thirty young people from diverse backgrounds through participation in the Global Youth Media Council (GYMC). The council aimed to provide its young participants with an opportunity to present their views on global media and youth in the early 21st century. The GYMC brought together youth from approximately twenty countries, including Sweden, Angola, Australia, Bolivia, Germany, Qatar, the USA, and the UK. These represented a range of economically rich and poor countries and included female and male students aged from about fourteen to twenty one. Rarely has a group like this gathered to discuss the impact of media on young people's lives. The GYMC ran in parallel with the main World Summit sessions, and culminated with a fifteen-minute presentation of recommendations to the Summit delegates during the closing ceremony. This article discusses the GYMC as a unique media literacy experience and discusses the types of media learning it enabled. It focuses on the Summit's aim to give young people a 'voice' and an opportunity to experience international and intercultural dialogue about media reform. In particular, the article considers the concepts of voice and identity and the extent to which

the Summit successfully allowed young people's ideas to be heard. It explores these ideas by focussing closely on the experiences of the young Australians involved in GYMC. The article concludes by making recommendations for improvements at future international conferences in which young people are involved in discussions about global media.

Australian Youth Council on Mass Media

The Australian Youth Council on Mass Media was formed in response to a request from the Swedish organisers the 5th World Summit on Media for Children and Youth for media education organizations in different parts of the world to involve young people in local dialogues about global media. In response, the Queensland chapter of Australian Teachers of Media conducted a competition inviting students to video tape a two-minute 'piece to camera' discussing what they believed to be the most important issues facing young people and their experiences of the media. Entries were received from around Australia and six young people were chosen to travel to Brisbane to take part in a two-day workshop held during a media teachers' conference in May 2009. At this workshop, the students worked in teams to produce two "One minute wonder" videos (See Figure 1) [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbSE1rAU5Dc>] commenting on the relation

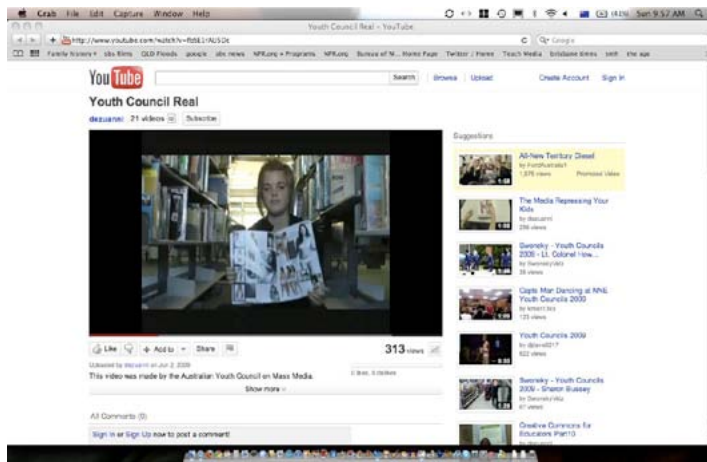


Figure 1: One minute wonder produced by students from the Australian Youth Council on Mass Media.

ship between young people and media. At the end of the second day, the students were required to screen their videos and take part in a question and answer session with teachers during the final session of the conference.

The production of these videos [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ixwjw7CIGB8>] provided the students with an opportunity to work together to discuss the issues they believed to be central to the relationship between young people and media and to use the short video form to express these ideas to an adult audience. In this sense, the students entered a dialogue with each other and with a broader audience about the media. As Goodman has argued, media production is an important means of engaging young people in dialogue about media (Goodman and Greene 2003). Each of the videos focused on the ways in which the media tend to construct problematic, negative, or marginalising representations of young people. It is worth noting that prior to these two workshop days, these six students had not previously met and had to undertake quite a bit of negotiation to develop their ideas. The dialogue about their ideas was extended when the videos were screened to teachers at the conference and the students were required to answer questions about content of the videos.

After this experience, the students were invited to take part in the trip to Sweden to be part of the Global Youth Media Council. Four students accepted this invitation and began to take part in online conversations via a Facebook group with the members of other youth media councils from around the world. This involved responding to a series of questions about national media posted by members of Sweden's youth media council. Less formal conversations between members of the youth councils also began as individuals 'friended' each other

in the social networking space. At the local level, the Australian students were required to undertake fundraising activities in their school communities to pay for their international flights and accommodation in Sweden. The students also received generous sponsorship from a local film distribution company and a charitable trust with an interest in international educational experiences for young people.

The Global Youth Media Council

The Global Youth Media Council took place in parallel to the main program at the 5th World Summit on Media for Children and Youth. While media educators, teachers, policy makers and industry representatives met for a series of keynote presentations and discussions, the 30 members of the Youth Council met each afternoon as a small group to discuss and respond to issues relating to young people and global media. During the mornings, members of the Youth Council took part in the main Summit sessions, attending keynote presentations and practical production workshops. In addition, the Australian youth delegates wrote a series of articles based on interviews with the keynote speakers, which were then published in the summit newsletter and posted online. Each afternoon, the Youth Council met to develop a series of recommendations to be presented during the Summit's closing ceremony, which took the form of both statements and as a series of short media productions. These sessions were facilitated by a youth advocacy specialist from the United Kingdom assisted by several members of the UK Youth Council. The first three days of the Youth Council workshops consisted of a series of organised activities to facilitate dialogue to allow young people from different countries to present their views on the media issues relevant in their countries. A broad range of issues and concerns were discussed in robust, long, and complex conversations before they were distilled into six main recommendations (see Figures 2, 3, and 4). The Youth Council members also took part in an 'action' in which they marched through the main Summit at lunch time, chanting and asking Summit delegates to sign a petition supporting their recommendations. This process reflected a version of media literacy education in which new knowledge and awareness leads to social action (Hobbs 1998).



Figure 2: Members of the Global Youth Media Council discussing issues and recommendations for improvements in youth for media.

The final two days involved practical production activities in which the students worked in teams to:

- produce a press release, logo, and website, including a petition to be signed in support of theGYMC’s campaign <http://globalyouthmediacouncil.com/>;
- an animation [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpcosLRNPQQ>] focused on global youth internet access;
- and a video [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IvVqryi1qUI>] depicting global youths’ lack of voice in global media debates.

These media productions were intended to involve young people in the process of using media to further their involvement in the dialogue about media issues and to take their message to a broader audience. The centrepiece of these productions was a campaign called “Are you with us?” in which theGYMC called on the Summit delegates and people beyond the Summit to implement their six recommendations. The members of the council agreed to promote the campaign back in each of their own countries, using the media productions as resources.



Figure 3: Six issues related to young people and global youth emerged through discussion and debate.

Limited access to the Internet - Governments, mobile operators and media multi-nationals should work together to insure free or affordable internet access in schools and libraries.

Making sure children are safe using the Internet - Education about the danger of the Internet, starting in Primary School, including rights and obligations.

Children and young people are not involved in making decisions - More articles written by children and youth in national and local newspapers. Every country should have a Youth Media Council to comment on children’s TV content.

Negative representation of children and young people in the media - Media must adopt existing ethical guidelines on reporting on children and youth to include a balanced representation.

Lack of media literacy - Media education should be a part of the curriculum from an early age in every country.

Commercial interest versus social responsibility - Only products that are linked with children’s positive development should be associated with children’s media. More non-commercial newspaper/radio/TV channels, should be funded by foundations / governments / charities.

Figure 4: The final list of recommendations developed by the Global Youth Media Council.



Figure 5: Members of the Global Youth Media Council producing an animation (left) and presenting as part of the closing ceremony at the 5th World Summit of Media for Children and Youth (right).

The culmination for the Global Youth Media Council was involvement in the Summit closing ceremony. This was one of the highlights of the Summit and brought the youth council together with the adult delegates at the Summit (Figure 5). The final presentation can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVSKI-CbCmw>

The Australian Delegates

The four young Australians who took part in the Global Youth Media Council were from a diverse range of backgrounds. Three of the students had not previously travelled overseas and all four students spoke of the trip to Sweden as an opportunity of a lifetime. Apart from their interest in young people and global media, these students had little in common. The group was made up of a sixteen-year-old female student from Cairns in far north Queensland; a seventeen-year-old female student from the mining community of Mt. Isa in remote north western Queensland; a sixteen-year-old male student from Brisbane, a city of 1 million people located in South East Queensland; and a fourteen-year-old male student from Melbourne, a city of 3 million people in Victoria in the southern part of Australia. All these students were considered to be ‘high achievers’ in their schools and all had performed well in the initial competition and during the production workshops leading up to the trip to Sweden. All the students also shared relatively high-level media production skills and were familiar with using video cameras and video editing software. These students were used to ‘geeking out’ with media production (Ito 2010).

Despite their diverse backgrounds, the students worked very well together and formed a cohesive team as they navigated the preparation for the trip, the long international flights, the international location and the

challenging workshops. The students worked hard to make a significant contribution to discussions during theGYMC sessions and were substantially involved in the creative output of the group and the development of the six key recommendations. In this sense, it might be said that the students effectively represented an Australian perspective on global media and youth. The students also generously took part in a series of interviews to reflect on their involvement in the trip and these interviews form the data to be discussed throughout the rest of this article.

Data Collection, Method of Analysis and Theoretical Framework

The two authors of this article are the adults who accompanied the Australian students to Sweden. We conducted a series of informal interviews with the students using portable ‘flip’ video cameras. The first set of interviews was conducted after the group arrived in Sweden, but prior to the beginning of the World Summit sessions. Students were asked about their experiences of the trip to that point and their expectations and hopes for the Global Youth Council sessions. The second set of interviews was conducted at the end of the week, during the journey back to Australia. At this point, the students were handed the cameras and asked to interview each other about their experiences at the Summit. This qualitative data was analysed to identify and interpret commonly held views of the four students about their experiences of theGYMC. In this way the analysis aims to elucidate the ways in which the students’ experiences of intercultural dialogue about global media experiences provided opportunities for them to voice their opinions and to learn from each other. The analysis aims to identify what the students learnt about

the media; about other young people's experiences of the media; and how this impacted each of the students. Through this analysis, the article aims to shed new light on the possibilities for media literacy education through intercultural dialogue in globalized contexts.

The article draws on a key theory to consider the Global Youth Media Council as a space in which young people's voices potentially have influence and in which young people discover new ways of being that are potentially transformative and agentive. This is Foucault's theory of heterotopias which he describes as spaces that are potentially non-hegemonic (Foucault and Miskowiec 1986). He argues that these spaces "are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted" (24). Heterotopias are potentially spaces in which voices that are usually marginalised may be brought into the centre and in which no one voice is considered to represent 'the truth.' This article argues that the Global Youth Media Council was a heterotopic space that allowed young people more freedom to speak and more power to act than they usually have in their schools and in the societies in which they live. It provided them with the opportunity to perform identity work in non-normative ways in a space that provided freedom to vary from social and cultural norms. This theory provides a way to think about the space and opportunity provided by theGYMC for young people to speak safely, present their 'voice' and challenge their own and others' thinking about global media cultures. From this perspective, theGYMC might be understood as providing an alternative to young people's frequent experience of being marginalised by social and cultural debate about the relationship between young people and media (Kenway and Bullen 2001).

Adults often speak on behalf of young people and develop perspectives that purport to protect their best interests without actually consulting them (Buckingham 2000). Young people's opinions and perspectives are often considered to be less valuable than those of adults, particularly educators, policy makers, and 'opinion' leaders as represented in the mainstream media. Research has also shown that young people often create normative systems in which it is not 'safe' or acceptable to challenge mainstream views about social and cultural processes (Dezuanni 2009). That is, it can be socially and culturally risky within peer groups for young people to present alternative opinions about me-

dia and popular culture. TheGYMC aimed to redress these problems by providing young people an opportunity to have a dialogue in a safe space and then 'speak back' to an international adult audience.

Media Education, Intercultural Dialogue and Identity Work

Media education has a long history of exploring intercultural concepts through its focus on media representations of people, places, and ideas. The academic field of Cultural Studies has influenced media education through its focus on gender, ethnicity, class, and national cultures (Williamson 1990; Hall and Open University 1997). It is typical, for example, for media education students to conduct visual analysis of media texts to identify the values and beliefs underlying the construction and reception of the texts. Media education, however, has focused less on the role of intercultural dialogue as a strategy for learning about how the media deals with cultural difference. While discussion and conversation about issues is common in media classrooms, these dialogues usually occur within closed classrooms in which the conversations occur within peer groups and the institutional expectations of the school. Dezuanni (2010) argues that this positions young people such that it is risky for them to speak openly and honestly with their peers and teachers. From this perspective, the Global Youth Media Council provided a potentially unique opportunity for its young participants to step outside their comfort zones in an unfamiliar context that provided an opportunity to be open to cultural diversity. TheGYMC provided a heterotopic space in which it was less risky to explore a diversity of opinions and ideas.

The desire for the Youth Council to provide a unique (and less risky) space was evident during the first interview conducted with members of the Australian Youth Media Council, which took place over lunch in Karlstad before the first Summit sessions. The students had just arrived on the train from Stockholm and were very excited about taking part in the Summit. It is clear from their responses that there was a lot of expectation for what the experience should be able to provide:

Teacher: What do you think the conference is going to be like?

Adam: I think it's going to be really interesting to hear what people from all over the world have got to say about media and kids and give their opinions and all that. And, um, yeah, I think it's going to be a really good experience.

Mark: I think the main thing I want to get out of it is talking to other people our own age from around the world. And just, sort of conversing with them about, you know, whether they are facing the same sort of issues on different sides of the world. And yeah, just finding out that, sort of, cultural shock value of how your media is different to mine and how do they compare? What's the same, what's different? I think that's the main reason I wanted to come to this international Summit. [...] We can see and analyse and all that sort of thing, what's in front of our face. But what's in the faces of others is a different thing.

Danielle: I am keen to learn more about the cultural, like the diversity and stuff. Yeah, what Mark said about learning about other people's... like what they see. That's pretty interesting. Yeah, I just think it will be a good experience. [...]. I'm keen for it to break stereotypes of other countries. Like through the country, you just sort of have assumptions about what they do and what they are like and how they talk and stuff. And I think it would be interesting to see if that's true or not.

Amanda: I am really looking forward to the workshops, like just looking forward to learning about all sorts of different things. Cause I'm going to be a teacher, just learning about, like with different cultures and stuff like that, so you get other people's input. It will be a good experience to have come here, like being my first international trip and then telling my students in the future that I've been to a conference.

At least two common ideas come out of the students' answers. Firstly, they want to learn about other young people's media experiences and they believe that the Summit will provide a unique experience that is generally less possible via classroom based media education experiences. These students seem to have a positive disposition to the idea of intercultural dialogue. It is likely that the students' previous experiences of submitting to the competition, taking part in the workshop in Brisbane and meeting other international Youth Council members through Facebook has oriented them towards this perspective. They recognise this as a unique opportunity to learn about the media and other young people's experiences of it. Mark's comment that "what's in the faces of others is a different thing" suggests openness to the idea that there are limits to what he can learn from analysing

his own situation. The idea that what others "see" might be different from one's own perspective demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of what the Summit might offer as a learning experience. It also suggests a willingness to treat other young people's perspectives and ideas with respect and that Mark recognises limitations of his own knowledge. It is interesting that later in the interview all the Australian students expressed a degree of anxiety about whether or not the other students would be able to speak English and the possibility that this might hinder their possibilities for having a meaningful exchange of ideas.

The second common idea to come out of the students' responses is that they want to explore the idea of cultural diversity and seem excited to have the opportunity to learn about other people. Danielle's comment that she wants to "break stereotypes of other countries" suggests that she wants to have a deeper understanding of other young people's cultures and experiences. She recognises the limitations of her own understanding of people from other countries and wants to rectify this. She seems willing to have her ideas challenged. Amanda recognises the educational potential of the Summit from the perspective of a future teacher. In 2010, she was in her first year as a university student undertaking a pre-service teacher education course. Her perspective that the Summit will expose her to other people's "input" suggests that she believes she has a lot to learn from the experience. It is interesting that prior to taking part in the Summit, the students' construction of the Summit was that it would be a unique educational opportunity and an opportunity to challenge themselves. They have not, for example, constructed it as an opportunity to voice their own opinions or to challenge the global media status quo. They have conceived of the Summit very much as a heterotopia in which young people will come together to exchange ideas in a free and supportive way that will enable them to become more informed and better people.

Post Summit Reflections

On the final day of the Summit, the Australian members of the Global Youth Council said their good-byes to their new international friends and got back on the train to Stockholm. The teachers handed the flip cams to the students and asked them to interview each other to reflect on their experiences of the Summit. The following exchange was recorded by Danielle as she asked Mark some initial questions:

Danielle: As this is a reflection, why don't you reflect for the camera?

Mark: The conference was quite good, I thought. It was a really well put together four days, I think. Even though I found it to be quite ironic that it was a conference for youth and children and media but most of the people there were adults. I'm just saying. But even as a young person being there at a conference, it was focused mainly at teachers. But it was really good. I found it to be quite a good learning experience.

Danielle: So if they could improve it what do you reckon they should do?

Mark: I reckon invite more kids... invite more kids... cause they're the future of media, I guess. They [the teachers] need to appreciate that more... rather than just take it back to the classroom. Have them [the students] get a first-hand experience.

Mark's interpretation of the experience suggests that while he enjoyed himself and learnt a lot he was disappointed that the main Summit agenda tended to exclude young people and that the Youth Council sessions were not considered to be a key aspect of the Summit. His recommendation is for more young people to be invited to the conference. It should be noted that theGYMC included about 30 young people and the Summit included several hundred delegates. Mark's comments therefore reflect the reality that the youth council members were significantly overwhelmed by the sheer number of adults. It is also the case that theGYMC sessions occurred in a location relatively remote from the main Summit sessions and that few adults at the Summit were aware that they were taking place. There was no interaction between theGYMC and the main delegates except for the closing ceremony presentation. Therefore, the Youth Council members were not really in dialogue with the adults at all. Mark's point is that more kids should be invited so that they can experience the knowledge developed in a conference context, rather than teachers simply talking to each other about what to take back to the classroom. As mentioned above, during one lunchtime theGYMC members took part in an 'action' during which they marched on the Summit delegates while they were having lunch, to increase the sense that they had a 'voice' during the Summit. In this context, Mark's comments might be seen as representing the voice of a sixteen-year-old teenager who feels like an outsider in the main, adult-oriented, Summit agenda.

Despite Mark's disappointment at feeling somewhat marginalised by the main Summit agenda, he gained a great deal from his involvement in the Youth Council sessions, as indicated in the following exchange:

Danielle: What do you think you are going to take back to Australia?

Mark: A wealth of knowledge about... on youth and media... really, and that's not being, you know, pompous...yeah, really, and a lot more understanding about global perspectives on youth and media.

Danielle: Do you think that our campaign is going to be successful?

Mark: I think it will be as successful as we make it. And I really, really, really believe in it. I think it's going to be a winner.

Danielle: Is your heart and soul in it? Are you emotional for our campaign like I was?

Mark: Oh, well, I didn't cry when were all about to leave. But I think the reason I didn't cry was because I know I am still going to be connected to those people through the campaign. And I am going to make it a point to be further involved in it and not just go home and leave it.

Danielle: How are you going to take it to – are you going to go to the papers or whatever?

Mark: Ah, yeah, the two main outlets I'm going for are children's television and that's probably going to be through Carbon media and ABC 3. And also youth radio, 4ZZZ. So I've got two main connections there. And also I have a reporter who took interest in me before I went to the conference.

Danielle: So, if you could pick one favourite thing about this entire trip, what do you think it is?

Mark: I'm going to say the first young Swedish people that we met as a youth council on the first day. A bunch of them came up and we just started chatting and it was the first international connection that I made and it led to many more. Yeah – it was terrific.

Danielle: Peace out!

Mark has clearly gained a great deal from the Youth Council sessions, including knowledge about other young people's media experiences and inspiration to try to effect change on his return to Australia. His repetition that he "really" believes in the campaign developed by theGYMC suggests that he is passionate about it. As a media education experience, theGYMC has provided Mark with a host of new knowledge about the

key media related issues facing young people around the world, which he is unlikely to have had an opportunity to develop in his usual classroom experiences. In addition, it is clear that the GYMC provided Mark with a cause and community to identify with. While he felt like an outsider in the broader Summit context, his reflection suggests he felt like an insider within this group of international friends, who share his passion for media reform. He was very pleased to be able to make these friends and to be accepted within the group. He feels empowered by this connection and wants to take the campaign back to his home country and to continue the dialogue about young people and media in a broader context. He is serious enough about this to have considered some avenues for action on his return to Australia. For Mark, whose reflections were similar to the other Australian delegates' reflections, the GYMC was informative and inspirational.

Media Learning and the Global Youth Media Council

The GYMC provided a unique media literacy education experience for the four young Australians discussed in this article because they learnt about global media issues through intercultural dialogue and through their involvement in sustained media production. The authors of this article believe that intercultural dialogue enabled the development of connected and deep knowledge about the media. It was connected in the sense that it allowed the students to hear the first hand experiences of other young people, providing them with insights and understandings they would be less likely to develop in their school classrooms. They gained depth of knowledge through making comparisons across countries and by going through the process of distilling commonalities and differences to develop their set of recommendations for media reform. During discussions led by other young people, they learnt about the complex ways in which the media operates in different parts of the world and the differences and similarities to the Australian context. This learning aligns to the media education 'key concepts' of 'institutions and industries'. They also learn about media 'audiences' through their consideration of the relationships between young people and the media in different countries and the extent to which young people have access to the means of production.

The students also developed their media literacies through sustained media production experiences leading up to and during the Summit. As noted above,

in the lead up to the Summit they produced videos of themselves talking about the media and 'one minute wonder' videos about young people and media. During the trip to Sweden and the Summit, they documented their travel through photography and video production; they took part in practical workshops; they planned and wrote articles for the Summit newsletter; and they produced various aspects of the GYMC campaign. The students each developed a range of skills and knowledge about forms of media production. More importantly they learnt how to use their media production skills to contribute to dialogue and debate on an issue highly relevant to them. It could be argued that media literacy education has no more important goal than to enable young people to use the tools provided by digital media to take part in 'conversations' about media power, identities, and cultural diversity.

Conclusion: From the Margins to the Centre and Back Again

The members of the Australia Youth Media Council travelled around the world by plane and train with the objective of spending several days talking with other young people about their experiences with the media. They left their communities and their comfort zones to embark on an adventure with the ultimate aim of improving the relationship between media and young people. They travelled on the modern day equivalents of boats to undertake a process not dissimilar to the journeys undertaken by generations of people seeking to understand difference and explore 'the unknown'. Foucault argues, "The ship is the heterotopia par excellence. In civilisations without boats, dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure, and the police take the place of pirates" (Foucault and Miskowiec 1986). The Global Youth Media Council sessions in Karlstad allowed a group of thirty young people to dream of better media futures, to be adventurous and step outside their comfort zones, and to 'steal' ideas and techniques from the mainstream media to spread their message. The GYMC, however, did come to an end and the campaign for media reform has not been as successful as the four young Australians would have hoped. While they learnt a great deal from their experience, subsequent conversations with them suggest that they are disappointed about the outcome of their campaign.

The problem with heterotopias is that by definition they exist in contrast to everyday spaces and as the young participants returned to their schools and lives, it has not been easy for them to stay connected to the

'cause', despite being connected through social networking tools like Facebook. The Global Youth Council on Media existed in a particular time and space and there has been little to support the young participants in their quest for media reform. The remaining part of this article makes several recommendations for how the organisers of future international media education conferences that include young people might support youth delegates to have greater success during beyond the end of the conference.

The first recommendation is that youth involvement in adult conferences should be more integrated with the main conference agenda so that the young participants are not marginalised. As Mark points out, it is ironic that a conference about young people should not include more young people and make them part of the main conference. There should be more dialogue between young people and adults, not just between young people and between adults.

Secondly, the highly successful model used as the basis for the Global Youth Media Council should be used to create dispersed and ongoing dialogues between young people and adults about global media. The Karlstad experience showed that there is a great deal to be gained from bringing young people from diverse international backgrounds together to discuss the media related issues facing young people. The Australian experience of developing a local Youth Media Council also showed that it is beneficial to involve young people in more localised contexts in conversations and through creative work about media. It would be ideal to spread this model to create an ongoing dialogue about youth and media.

Finally, international gatherings of young people should occur more frequently. The authors of this article believe that an ongoing and more regular 'space' for dialogue about youth and media needs to be developed for genuine change to be possible. This is more likely to occur if young people and sympathetic adults work together to create this space at local and international levels and also through more scaffolded and directed use of online social networking. The World Summit on Media for Children and Youth occurs every three to four years. It would be ideal if an international Global Youth Council event took place every one to two years that involved young people from previous years mentoring other young people through the process. The campaign developed in Karlstad has stalled because it relies on individual young people in marginalised positions going back to their communities to take on powerful media

companies. Reform would be more possible if young people believed they were supported in ongoing ways by a global movement that is built from the ground up in local contexts and supported through an international online network of colleagues. To put it another way, the type of heterotopic space developed through the Global Youth Media Council in Karlstad needs to be extended and networked. This is the only way that young people will be brought to the centre of discussions about young people and media in a sustained way.

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