Youth Cultural Production in Practice and in Policy

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the increase in youth cultural production and youth involvement in the creative industries. The project researches structures that youth encounter, including federal, provinicial, and municipal policies, as they attempt to create small-scale and self-generated careers for themselves in the creative industries, and also looks at initiaves that youth create themselves, including artist networks, in order to facilitate their entry in the realm of work in the creative industries. After examining Canadian federal cultural policy in comparison to British cultural policy and provincial educational policy in Québec, I turn to a series of case studies concerning local, national, and international artist networks. Drawing on existing research from the sometimes disparate fields of research in creative economies, cultural studies, media education, and subculture studies, this dissertation examines the possibilities and limitations in the ways that these fields address youth cultural production. Ultimately, connections need to be made between these fields to fully encapsulate and support youth realities, as no one field offers an adequate theoretical framework to register contemporary youth activities in the creative industries. To this end, the project suggests a creative ecology model in order to register small-scale youth cultural production and the relationships between youth, employment, and sustainable community development.

Ce mémoire examine l'augmentation de la production culturelle des jeunes et leur participation au sein des industries de la création. Ce projet documente les différentes structures se trouvant sur le parcours des jeunes souhaitant développer leur carrière artistique, qu'elles soient fédérales, provinciales, ou municipales, ainsi que les initiatives des jeunes eux-mêmes, comme par exemple les réseaux d'artistes.

Après avoir examiné la politique culturelle fédérale au Canada en comparaison avec la politique culturelle de la Grande-Bretagne et la politique d'éducation provinciale au Québec, j'étudierai les réseaux d'artistes au niveau local, national, et international. Au regard de la recherche existante dans les domaines de l'économie de la création, des études culturelles, de l'éducation médiatique, et des études sur la contre-culture, ce mémoire examine les possibilités ainsi que les limites de ces domaines à cibler la production culturelle des jeunes. Au bout du compte, ces domaines se doivent d'entretenir des liens ténus, car aucun n'offre une base théorique assez complète pour condenser de façon exhaustive les activités des jeunes d'aujourd'hui dans les industries créatives. Ce projet suggère enfin un modèle écologique pour la création, afin d'intégrer la production culturelle des jeunes à petite échelle et les relations entre les jeunes, l'emploi et un développement communautaire durable.

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My partner, Adam Waito, has provided formatting and proofreading assistance for this dissertation, but more importantly, his experiences as an emerging musician form the backdrop of my understanding of the issues that I set out to tackle in this dissertation. Though he is not formally interviewed in this project, his experiences underride many of my assumptions about trends in youth cultural production. My interview subjects also sparked new ideas and avenues of research through their comments about their experiences; I thank them for their time and their patience.

Finally, my parents, Kathy and Peter Campbell, have always supported me and my academic endeavours, and their complete faith in my abilities has allowed me to pursue this doctoral research. Through their example, I credit them with instilling in me both a strong work ethic and a belief in the importance of education itself. Without this, this project would have never come to fruition.

Preface

The central investigation of this dissertation is the mapping of youth realities as they face the creative industries. The project works towards a better understanding of available life pathways for young people interested in careers in the arts, of their experiences of those pathways, and of structures they encounter to facilitate their goals. To this end, the project investigates how youth respond to and negotiate current structures that frame the creative industries in Canada. Chapter 1 sets the stage and maps the trend in small-scale youth cultural production, first through some opening anecdotes and interviews, and then a review of current Canadian Census data. Chapter 2 examines the possibilities and shortcomings of current conceptualizations of youth to direct academic research that speaks to youth realities at work and in the education system. In Chapter 3, I turn to the Canadian policy landscape and examine Canadian cultural policies in relation to their ability to foster youth experiences in the cultural industries. In Chapter 4, I look to Britain, and examine the possibilities and limitations of recent British cultural policies, and think through some of the implications of these British cultural policies for education systems. For this investigation, I turn back to the Canadian context, and as education is a provincially administered in Canada, I look at the framework for arts education in the Québec Education Plan. After this investigation of structures that direct youth experiences, in the second half of dissertation, I turn to initiatives that youth have built themselves in the process of navigating the creative industries. I place emphasis on the concept of networks as they relate to youth cultural production, and develop a series of case studies that examines the disjuncture between current cultural policies and youth cultural production and activities. In Chapter 5, I look at artist networks

that are based out of Toronto and Montréal, Canadian Youth Arts Network and Indyish, respectively, and investigate how artist networks help youth facilitate their careers in the arts. Lastly, in Chapter 6, I look at the international youth-led initiative, Ignite the Americas, and look at the possibilities and challenges of youth partnering with governments to work towards a more youth-centered agenda for cultural policies. I also investigate the ways in which Ignite the Americas makes connections between community cohesion, the creative industries, and youth employment, and continue this investigation with an examination of the Remix Project in Toronto, which also makes these connections, and offers programs to youth to help foster their immersion in the creative industries. Ultimately, I conclude that a more comprehensive youth policy framework and a more responsive education system are needed to better support youth involved in the creative industries.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Mapping Youth Cultural Production

Beefs and Billboard Charts; Generational Divides and Digital Youth—What Soulja Boy Can Teach Us About Contemporary Youth Cultural Production

At a time when aging rockers like The Rolling Stones, U2, Madonna, Bon Jovi, and Bruce Springsteen have the highest grossing concert tours ("Rolling Stones' Tour Breaks Attendance Records", 2007; Byrne, 2008; Wadell, 2008), it could appear as if the young have been eclipsed by the old as the heavyweights in the music industry. But figures other than concert sales, such as digital downloads and ringtone sales, paint a different picture, both of where the music industry may be heading, and who is leading it there. At 17, Soulja Boy home-recorded and self-produced the Grammy-nominated single "Crank That (Soulja Boy)," more commonly known as "Superman," which spawned the "Superman" dance craze and became a #1 single on the Billboard charts, and also set records in both digital download, ringtone sales, and YouTube hits ("Crank That [Soulja Boy] Hits No 1 On The Pop Chart, No 1 In Ringtone Sales & No 1 Digital," 2007). While detractors may criticize the vapidity of Soulja Boy's lyrics ("Soulja Boy off in this ho/Watch me crank it/Watch me roll/Watch me crank dat Soulja Boy/Then superman that ho") (Soulja Boy, 2007) and accuse him of writing for the highly lucrative but blatantly commercial and sonically simplistic ringtone market, his career nonetheless sheds light on emerging trends in youth cultural production.

Amongst Soulja Boy's detractors is veteran rapper Ice-T. On a mix-tape that was released in June 2008, Ice-T recorded a rant in which he decried the "garbage" quality of Soulja Boy's "Crank That (Soulja Boy)" single, and suggested that Soulja

Boy "single-handedly killed hip hop" by destroying the importance that has been given to lyrics by hip hop icons Rakim, Das EFX, Big Daddy Kane, and Ice Cube ("Ice-T says Soulja Boy killed hip hop; Soulja Boy says Ice-T is old and washed up", 2008). While Ice-T framed his criticism of Soulja Boy around the parameters of authenticity that have been so central to hip hop culture, Soulja Boy was quick to reframe the terms of the debate from ones of authenticity to ones of generation. Soulja Boy opens his response by stating "This nigga Ice-T is old as fuck! This nigga is old enough to be my great-grandfather. We wikipedia'd this nigga. This nigga was born in 1958" (*Soulja Boy Response to Ice-T*, 2008). Here, Soulja Boy evokes a generational (or hyperbolic multi-generational) divide between not only himself and Ice-T, but also implicitly between contemporary and seminal hip hop, established and emerging artists. This divide is not only evoked in terms of age, but also in terms of different modes of accessing and publishing information, as Wikipedia is Soulja Boy's go-to reference for background information to discredit Ice-T's ability to comment on youth cultural production, and YouTube is the vehicle to publish these opinions, rather than Ice-T's more traditional medium of a recorded and distributed musical release.

For Soulja Boy, the Internet and other digital technologies are not only a source of information, but are integral to his career. Soulja Boy originally self-published his music on the Internet, and the Internet was also the source of the growth of his fame; his debut album is entitled *souljaboytellem.com*, which is also the name of his website. Indeed, the music video for "Crank That (Soulja Boy)" depicts Soulja Boy's record contract being signed by instant messaging, and shows fans watching his famed "Superman" dance on-line and on cell phones. It also features its

own generational divide – that between parents and children – the latter having fully tuned into Soulja Boy via various platforms, and the former scratching their heads at this seemingly "unknown" Internet star but then running to cash in by signing him to a record deal. In the beef with Ice-T, Soulja Boy positions Ice-T in a similar way to the clueless parent who is seen in his video. That Ice-T was born before the age of the Internet is a great source of amusement to Soulja Boy, and he evokes the rapid cycles of stardom that the Internet creates and that Ice-T is seemingly unable to grasp. He states: "I looked you up. This is a new day and age… You was born before the Internet was created! How the fuck did you even find me? 'Superman', that was last year, you late! Get with the times, you old ass nigga" (*Soulja Boy Response to Ice-T*, 2008). Here, Soulja Boy does not refute his Internet-based flash-in-the-pan status, but rather dismisses Ice-T for being so attached to something that has now become passé, even if what is passé is his own hit record. He instructs Ice-T that he "must understand. Shit is different." Hyper-aware of his Internet phenomenon status, Soulja Boy comments on the video that he is making for YouTube, saying "this is going to have a million views in like, three days." After repeatedly evoking that Ice-T's age voids his ability to comment on new trends in hip hop, Soulja Boy works his way into a more engaged rejoinder to Ice-T's criticisms, and suggests that if Ice-T is dissatisfied with the state of hip hop, then he should take action to improve it. Soulja Boy suggests that Ice-T "go to the hood. Start a hip hop school" (*Soulja Boy Response to Ice-T*, 2008).

While this beef may have been Ice-T's stab at garnering media attention and selling records that Soulja Boy happily participated in, it nevertheless speaks to a generational divide and to divergent routes of cultural production. If this is the case,

what does this beef have to tell us about youth involvement in the creative industries? The Canadian Youth Artist Network has noted the "lack of communication between established and emerging artists, which prevents a transfer of information across generations" (2008, p.7). Is this beef one type of "communication" —or lack thereof —between established and emerging artists, one that illuminates not a lack of transfer of information, but a lack of transfer of values and priorities behind cultural production between generations? If Soulja Boy suggests that starting a "hip hop school" is a way to improve the state of contemporary hip hop, is this the role that education might play vis à vis these trends in youth cultural production? While this media-ready beef between Soulja Boy and Ice-T may be indicative of generational divides between emerging and established artists and of trends in youth cultural production, including trends of digitization, self-production, and the importance of the Internet, Soulja Boy's sudden rise to fame is hardly representative of the typical youth experience in the creative industries. To turn to the experiences of more average youth, I open this introduction with a series of anecdotes about the experiences of three Montréal-based youth seeking out careers in the creative industries in different venues – as a writer, as a business owner, and as an intern in arts organizations. These anecdotes serve as an introductory mechanism for the mapping of contemporary youth experiences as cultural producers, which the project as a whole seeks to take up. The issues that emerge in these introductory anecdotes set the tone for the discussion of the types of issues that face youth cultural producers, and I return to this anecdotal method to close my discussion in the concluding chapter. In this introductory chapter, these anecdotes of individual

experiences are followed by a more macro-level mapping of youth in the creative industries, based on 2006 Canadian Census data.

Sean Swaps Summer Jobs

In the spring of 2004, Gmail e-mail accounts started to pick up steam, but at this time, the availability of these accounts was still limited to "invite only" from existing members. Due to high demand for these e-mail accounts, people starting selling their invites on eBay. In 2004, Sean Michaels was 22 and was studying at McGill University. He moved home to Ottawa for a summer job working for Canadian Culture Online in the Department of Canadian Heritage, but after moving back, he found out that his job had fallen through. Stuck at his parents' house in Ottawa, and noting the furor over the Gmail situation, on May 17, 2004, Sean started www.gmailswap.com, a message board where people could post what they would give for a Gmail invite. The rules were simple: no money could be exchanged, and no illicit activities could be offered (no sex, no drugs, etc.). The site took off as Sean wanted it to; for example, people offered to courier homemade brownies across the continent, to tour visitors around Istanbul, and to act as a personal bodyguard in Chicago. In one interview about his site, Sean commented: "The best part has really been the extraordinary wealth of creativity, character and human diversity that's been on show," and noted that "My favorite's probably the flight-crew member who has offered to send postcards once a month from all over the world" (Terdiman, 2004). At its peak, there were a thousand new posts on the site a day. Soon, most major news outlets (i.e. *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*) had contacted Sean at his

parents' house for interviews, where he was still sitting, unemployed. In July, he realized that he could sell banner ad space on the site, and this became his new summer job. As Gmail accounts became open to the general public, interest in www.gmailswap.com evidently waned, and Sean sold the gmailswap.com domain name for $600 in March 2005.

But this is not Sean's only foray into Internet-based ventures. Since 2003, Sean has also run the influential music blog www.saidthegramophone.com, which was the first blog of its kind to post free mp3s of new music. The blog is renowned in the music industry as a tastemaker, and was voted one of the best 25 blogs by *Time* in 2009 (McNihol, 2009). This site does not reap any direct financial benefits, as it does not sell any advertising space, but Sean has created a career for himself as a music journalist and also has adequate time to work on writing fiction: in 2008, he quit his job as a legal secretary to write a daily music column for the *Guardian Unlimited* web site. He says:

> For the past ten years, I wanted as a career to write fiction, so I always resisted slipping into other careers that would supersede that. Even coming out of university, and I could have tried to pursue writing work, I resisted that. I didn't even look into doing that, because I don't really want to spend all of my time writing about music for magazines. I started to work as a legal secretary and then this opportunity came along with the *Guardian*, which kind of stumbled into my lap. It was an issue of being presented an opportunity that felt like something I could accommodate within my writing career rather than would take over my writing career. So one of the reasons it worked or happened for me was its low-impact accidental nature rather than being something I sought out (S. Michaels, personal interview, July 2009).

While Sean relates that he found out about the job at the *Guardian Unlimited* through his "personal network system," he also suggests that many of the work opportunities he has encountered have emerged out of his success with creating a name for himself with *Said the Gramophone*:

> *Said the Gramophone* is I think 99% responsible for all of the paid work that I've done. Maybe my hardcore skills would have been enough to impress [the *Guardian Unlimited*], but it was my C.V, and at the head of my C.V. was *Said the Gramophone*, which my editor knew of. When I starting doing a little more freelancing around 2007, it was always like, "Hi, I write for *Said the Gramophone*, this is what I'd like to do for you. What do you say?" My work for *The Believer*, which was one of the higher profile gigs I got, came out of a comment left on *Said the Gramophone* by one of *The Believer*'s editors, just saying we're into something that had been written. I then emailed him, saying "Hey, you are cool," just to express my appreciation for his work. He wrote back saying he would be honoured if I ever wanted to do something for them. So that clearly, literally came out of *Said the Gramophone* (S. Michaels, personal interview, July 2009).

Here, Sean evokes the importance of the Internet and digital technologies that are central to Soulja Boy's career, but the scale of this importance is smaller, as Sean describes his blog and comments on it leading to freelancing writing work rather than multi-million dollar record deals.

While Sean's on-line endeavours have led to paid writing work, he describes his motivations not as specifically seeking out lucrative paid work, but rather as seeking out creative projects that are personally fulfilling and allow him to work with other like-minded people. Many youth involved in the creative industries have modest goals of, for example, being able to pay their rent through creative enterprises and seeing their creative projects come to fruition, rather than seeking out the ability to reap in millions. To this end, Soulja's Boy's take-up of the hip hop posture of seeking fame and demonstrative wealth acquisition is not representative of many youths' aspirations in the creative industries. In *DIY: The Rise of Lo-Fi Culture*, Amy Spencer argues

> In a society where the publishing and music industries are shaped by profit margins, what is radical about the participants of [the DIY] scene is that they simply want to exchange information about the bands, gigs, zines etc they have found exciting. The primary aim is to build unique idealized networks in which anyone can participate. Michael Cupid, an

> independent promoter from Bristol, explains that the members of the DIY underground aren't 'fixated with the promise of money, they are people who want to do something just to see it happen' (2005, p.11).

A central premise of this dissertation is that a desire "just to see it happen" can no longer be cast as "radical," as Spencer does above; this definition relies on a now outdated binary of "authenticity" (i.e. do-it-yourself [DIY] scene) and "incorporation" (i.e. profit margins), which is oversimplified and not very useful in terms of thinking about how subcultures and grassroots organizations—DIY or other—actually operate. Nonetheless, the idea that young people may be motivated by the desire "just to see it happen" remains useful. Indeed, Sean has spearheaded other creative projects that have no direct financial rewards: with others, he runs the art blog www.insidethefrozenmammoth.com and also runs a M60 – The Montréal 60 second film festival. Sean describes his motivations for seeking out these kinds of projects as follows:

> If you have the resources to do something, and in a lot of the creative industries those resources are time and expertise, if you have those resources, then you can do it. The reason why most of us want to have money is so that we can do cool stuff … One of the main motivating factors for a lot of the arts stuff is the result: I want to have this forum for my writing that is widely read maybe. Or I want to have this cool film festival, and the costs are nil (S. Michaels, personal interview, July 2009).

That the costs for this type of work—creating on-line forums for writing or producing short films—are nil speaks to the impact of the digitization of media, and the subsequent proliferation of youth cultural production.

Like many youth, Sean's involvement in the creative industries is not only motivated by the desire to realize personally meaningful projects; he is also seeking out a career, in his case, as a successful fiction writer. When interviewed in 2004 about *Said The Gramophone*, Sean said "my dream job is to be able to write things I

want to and see them published. I've not yet had any horrible jobs, but I'm looking forward to that delight in the new year" (Seroff, 2004). Through his pluck, Sean has been able to negotiate a balance between working on personal projects and working for money, and seems to have navigated himself away from "horrible jobs" for good. He has been able to do so out of his own determination, ingenuity, and ability to sense cultural trends. He credits his ability to navigate his way into where he is now to his understanding of the importance of the logistical aspects of creative work:

> One of the major challenges to creative people in order to make something of themselves, to translate their creations and abilities, I guess into money, but also just progress out of their basements, is the amount of logistical work that needs to be done. *Said the Gramophone* only works because there is a functioning website. It only works because initially we answered enough of our emails that we built a community. I have to pitch articles to magazines. I have to apply for grants. I have to actually do the work of the writing and meeting my deadlines and finding larger-scale projects to do. There is all of this kind of work that is distinct from the [creative] work itself and I think that's an essential part of why I've made things work for myself. You can do it without being a total pinhead self-managing …. I've meet some of these people who are so [obsequiously business-oriented]. That's not what I'm advocating. But I feel that is one of the places that a lot of artists struggle. They know how to paint but they don't know what else, how else, to do that. I've picked this stuff up by just applying lessons I've learnt in other fields to this, but I feel that that's something that in terms of the professionalization of the arts, that's really important. Even how to invoice people, how to figure out what your rate should be, and all of this kind of stuff, that stuff is hard to intuit, and it makes the difference of someone being able to support themselves or not (S. Michaels, personal interview, July 2009).

Sean makes a number of important remarks here about the necessity of navigating the logistical aspects of the creative industries, and this dissertation will look at some of the mechanisms that youth create to collect and share resources related to professionalization in creative fields. Beyond this, Sean credits his success with the importance of collaboration with like-minded individuals:

> For me, it's always been important to identify, take a mental note of kindred spirits I meet in my sphere and then I'm always rolling around in

> my head how to work with them. What's fun about that is that it gives you ideas for projects that are fun. Because kindred spirit isn't just someone you met, it's someone you click with. You meet these people and you agree to do projects together and those projects are exciting and fun. There's incentive to finish them because they're projects you're excited about (S. Michaels, personal interview, July 2009).

While surely Sean is unique in the diversity of creative projects he has spearheaded, he is not alone in grappling with the logistical aspects of the professionalization of creative projects and seeking out collaborations to sustain creative work. Plenty of young people are now also moving away from "horrible jobs" and into creative work, but not all of them are able to create and sustain their own careers in the creative industries as successfully as Sean. For many youth, creating their own work in the creative industries is an alternative to other types of less fulfilling work, but other types of more stable and more permanent work are also less readily available than they once were. This means that many youth are endeavoring to make a living in the creative industries, which is a field that is characterized by instability and low incomes for most youth. This dissertation does not merely suggest that youth should be supported as they seek on this type of work; rather, it questions why work in the creative industries is characterized by instability and low incomes, and asks how this type of work can be better supported to allow for greater stability. What kinds of assistance exist to enable these new pathways for young people in creative work? How do governments respond? How does academia respond? How do systems of education respond? If "creativity employs skills and these have to be learnt" (Sefton-Green, 2000, p.224), how do we as educators foster the kinds of skills that Sean has deployed along his journey?

Amy's Atelier: "It Was Exhausting"

While a surface-level reading of Sean's experiences may suggest that youth are easily able to steer themselves into their own careers in the creative industries, the purpose of this dissertation is also to register the more difficult aspects of negotiating one's own entry into the creative industries. At 19, Amy Johnson started selling homemade wares in the indie craft fair circuit in Vancouver. At these craft fairs, Amy networked with other craftspeople, and opened an on-line store to sell handmade goods. Amy noted there were other stores in Vancouver selling handmade goods, but she hoped to carve out her own niche in this industry, and to expand her business by also conducting workshops to teach the public the skills to make handmade items. Amy sought out a storefront space in Vancouver, but because of the high cost of renting retail space in Vancouver, Amy eventually decided to move to Montréal, and she opened a retail/workshop space, called Atelier Wooden Apples, in May 2006 when she was 22 years old. At the store, she sold handmade items made by artists ranging from 16-35 years old. She states that when selecting the items to sell in her store, she looked for a "certain level of quality because there are a lot of stores in Montréal, and around, and on the Internet, that sell hand-made things. I wanted higher-end things, sort of to prove that things could be made by hand and still have that look of quality" (A. Johnson, personal interview, June 2009). In the end, Wooden Apples sold goods from predominantly Canadian, and more specifically Montréal and Québec-based artists, including "clothing, jewellery, silkscreen and screen-printed books and notebooks and art, mostly gift things." Amy explains the importance of selling local and handmade goods as follows:

> The store was never chocked-full of stuff. I would do lots of limited runs of things. And they'd been gone. I liked doing that. You can go to Urban

> Outfitters now and buy things that look handmade, but it's not handmade, and they're ripping off these people who are printing designs and are unable to copyright them. I wanted to have a space for those people who actually came up with those ideas to sell their stuff. The idea was always to have a full-time craft fair (A. Johnson, personal interview, June 2009).

Here, Amy voices not so much a disdain for large corporate models of business, but the need to foster local artists who often do not have adequate resources to promote and protect themselves. The vision for Amy's store was to be one such resource.

Another important aspect of Atelier Wooden Apples for Amy were the skill-sharing workshops that she ran: "It was really important to me that whoever was teaching the workshop was really interested in sharing skills, not doing it to make a profit. All of the teachers basically volunteered. They got vouchers for the store and they got to take any other workshops they wanted for free" (A. Johnson, personal interview, June 2009). Wooden Apples ran workshops including introduction to the sewing machine, making your own body care and cleaning products, screenprinting, blockprinting, embroidery, knitting, and crocheting. Amy states that "They were all based on sharing information. They were never really complicated techniques or patterns. The intro was: here's the technique, now let's practice and work on it, and take it wherever you want. People would come back to the store with projects they'd taken on" (A. Johnson, personal interview, June 2009). Through these workshops that relied on volunteerism and skill-sharing, it seems that Amy's vision of Atelier Wooden Apples was that it would be a community space as much as it would be a place of business. This vision relies on an intertwining of art, commerce, and community – while some of these terms may have been previously positioned at odds with one another by champions of DIY movements, youth today increasingly navigate the ties between these terms in order to make careers for themselves in the

creative industries while sustaining personally meaningful projects that may not have profit as the main goal.

While youth activities may be moving towards this interpenetration of art, commerce, and community, government policies and structures have been slow to recognize and support these endeavours and rely on outdated models of youth cultural production. The combination of retail and workshop space was integral to the niche that Amy sought to carve out for herself as a business, but this dual focus of her business proved difficult to get support for:

> I applied for lots of grants, but if I had been only workshops, I would have been able to get grants, but because I had the retail aspect, I wasn't able to apply. It was always like they were saying 'why don't you change your business, we'll give you money.' They tell you to become a business then go back and re-apply as a non-profit. If I had gone back, applied as a non-profit, then only done the workshops, and not done the retail, I could have been an artist-run centre, but I couldn't have focused too much on the crafty things, it would've had to have been more print-making and things like that that they consider art. What they consider art is really tricky. And that wasn't what I was doing, so it wouldn't have made sense for me to adjust it that much (A. Johnson, personal interview, June 2009).

Beyond this, Amy experienced frustration with the process and complicated bureaucracy of starting up a business in Québec:

> The Québec government makes it hard to open a business. In Vancouver, they hold your hand a lot. It was so expensive to rent, but to open a business, they're like 'Fill out this form, now Jody's going to help you with the next form, then this is the thing you do after that.' It's the total opposite here. Let alone language, it was fine, I was able to do it, I was able to do it in French. But it's like pulling teeth. You call someone, and they claim that they don't know, then you have to call someone else, and they send you back to the first person, and it's all just to get a form. It took me going to the government about six times, and each time them telling me I'd now filled out all of the necessary forms, and then finding out I hadn't and getting an angry letter from the government even though they were the ones who had told me I had filled out all of the necessary forms. It was horrible. But once I had the space and everything, it was fine. It just took a lot longer than I had planned to do all the paper work. Even stuff like putting up your sign. It takes months

> and months of going back and measuring and taking 50 photographs from different angles (A. Johnson, personal interview, June 2009).

Québec's youth policy document *Young People Fully Involved in Their Own Success* notes that "Québec is facing an entrepreneurial shortage. Since 2000, it has remained below the Canadian average in terms of business start-ups (2006, p.27). The difficulties that Amy encountered getting her business off the ground may speak to this low rate of entrepreneurial activity in Québec; the difficulties of this start-up process may be even more of a deterrent to youth who are inexperienced in this area.

Overall, Amy found a lack of necessary support to sustain her business:

> I went to Y.E.S. [Youth Employment Services] when I was starting up and I took a really good free tax information seminar with them that was incredibly useful. They should have more available, but things were really limited. Everyone was like 'yeah, you're going to have no problem, of course there's money out there for you. You're female, you're under 25, you're doing something that's supporting teaching and creative learning.' And there was nothing. I found that surprising. It felt like there should have been someone out there backing me, but I was totally on my own (A. Johnson, personal interview, June 2009).

In the end, Amy did not have enough start-up capital to sustain her business, especially after a particularly hard time with the recession in Fall 2008, and Atelier Wooden Apples closed in January 2009. She describes that "in the end, it was all financial. I was going at a rate that was normal but I didn't start with enough money. It takes four years to make a profit and I was going … I wasn't plummeting or anything like that, but there wasn't enough money in the bank to sustain me for that long." Amy has started another on-line business, www.paperandpine.com, with a partner, and has also decided to go back to school in Interior Design in Fall 2009. Her experiences nonetheless speak to the entrepreneurial spirit of many young people involved with creative projects, and also speak to the desire to produce and participate in activities that are beyond the realm of profit, such as community

workshops. That these two activities—entrepreneurism and community development—exist together speaks to new modes of youth cultural production, and sets out new challenges for government policies.

Clarissa's Cycle of Internships: "I'm Sure You Can Imagine My Frustration"

One mechanism of support for youth involved in the creative industries is youth internships. Funded by municipal, provincial, and federal levels of government in Canada, these internships are designed to facilitate youths' entry into the realm of paid employment in the creative industries, but the end result of these internships is not always the smooth entry that is desired. With a background in art history, Clarissa Buchanan[1] set out to find work managing projects in arts organizations. She describes her experiences as a cyclic endeavour of "just trying to get a job after a job," of trying to get "a position that lasts more than 6 months" and trying to "stop being an intern" (C. Buchanan, personal interview, June 2009). Clarissa went through cycles of internships and contract positions, but describes that she was nonetheless "grateful" through this process that she "had a job in the first place, because so few people actually get jobs in cultural organizations back to back." She credits her ability to sustain a cycle of internships and contract-based work to having savvy bosses: "if you have a good boss, you can get internship after internship because they know which funding organizations [to apply to]." She describes that one of her bosses "got me three internships," but "some people only get one" because "their boss doesn't know how to work the system." When she worked for the Department of Canadian

[1] A pseudonym has been used.

Heritage, she found difficulty in breaking through to becoming an internal staff member, a process which she describes as "extremely difficult. You can do it, you have to be extremely patient, or you have to have a boss who is sly to help you get in, but it's not easy." Here, Clarissa speaks to the necessity of personal connections, and maneuvering personal networks in order to sustain careers in arts organizations; this often results in an inequitable distribution of work that disadvantages youth.

Clarissa's employment in the arts began with an internship at a municipal museum after she finished her B.A. at 22. In her first internship, which lasted for three months, Clarissa was paid through a now-defunct municipal grant for students to work in cultural institutions. After the three months expired, Clarissa's boss tried to get another internship to continue to be able to employ her, but wasn't able to find one. Clarissa's employer then negotiated with a private company to give the museum $10,000 for an annual internship, and this employed Clarissa as an intern for a subsequent 8 months. After this time, Clarissa was able to stay on at the museum through funding from a not-for-profit organization designed to assist youth. In order to receive funding from this organization to continue on at the museum, Clarissa had to pretend that she didn't have a job and go to the organization's offices for a job search. While at this organization, looking for a job, the museum offered her a job based on her job research skills. She had to complete a week-long job search course, where she had to work on skills such as refining her resumé, even though funds had already been given to the museum to hire her. As part of this contract, Clarissa had to return to the sponsoring not-for-profit organization on a monthly basis to meet with their staff to discuss her experiences and progress in her position at the museum. This series of internships points to the maneuvering that is often

necessarily to sustain a career in the arts as well as the lack of available permanent full-time work; Clarissa continued to work as an intern because the museum wanted to keep her on as staff member but there was not a position to hire her into. After these experiences of navigating the infrastructure of grants and funding for internships in order to stay employed, Clarissa decided to return to school to complete a M.A. in art history.

After completing her M.A., Clarissa returned to the job market, but her increased credentials did not diminish her frustrating experiences of short-term contracts. She worked as a project assistant, then a project officer, for the Department of Canadian Heritage. She was hired on a contract basis, and due to the federal government's regulations about how long someone can be employed by contract, she could only work in this capacity for eight months. In order to continue to be employed by Heritage, she was told to incorporate as a business:

> They couldn't hire me back, so they said 'we have to hire you back as a company, so we're hiring a consulting company to do the work.' I had to be a company, so I was a company for a bit, and then they were able to hire me again as casual for eight months. This couldn't be renewed, then they hired me back through a different [consulting] company. I was working for a company, but I was actually working for the federal government. The company hired me, and took seven dollars an hour off my pay cheque for no reason (C. Buchanan, personal interview, June 2009).

When Clarissa was hired by this outside consulting company, she was told by Heritage that this was only temporary, as she relates that she was informed that "we're opening a position for you, so you're going to be able to apply for your position that you're working now." But when the posting was put up, she was told "Human Resources didn't approve that we could do external hiring, so we have to hire internally, which means that you can't apply for your own job" (C. Buchanan,

personal interview, June 2009). Clarissa describes this period of time as an extremely frustrating experience, especially because of the internal hiring policies in the federal government. There were three other youth who underwent the same experiences as Clarissa, and she later found out that the people who had been hired for their positions had no experience in museums or cultural organizations. Clarissa expresses disbelief and frustration with this, as her mandate of Heritage was precisely this type of work: "That was our job, to work with different museums, to work with different groups who wanted to put their cultural content on-line, and they hired [these new employees] just because they already had permanent positions [without any experience in the field at all]." Clarissa expresses that the people who replaced her were not even interested in this type of work; "they're trying to go up government levels" and "they didn't stay there for more than a year, and they went to Correction Services after, or Human Resources Canada. None of them stayed. They were just using it to climb up internally. So the people who replaced me are not there anymore." She describes her whole experience working at the federal government as ultimately disappointing:

> When I worked for the Canadian government I thought that I had a really sweet job and I really liked it. But they couldn't secure me even though they said they would secure me … this really disappointed me. They hired somebody for my job that didn't have any experience in museums. It was disheartening [to know that people with permanent positions can transfer into unrelated fields]. I didn't want to have to move to Ottawa to get that permanent position either (C. Buchanan, personal interview, June 2009).

Clarissa points to the need for change in hiring policies so that there are more equitable opportunities for youth who seek to work in the administrative side of cultural organizations: "There are a lot of government jobs within the cultural/Heritage/art industry. A lot of the hiring is internal, and as a result, a lot of

people who are qualified are bypassed. People who are working as contractors can't apply for jobs that they themselves are doing, because they're not eligible. I think the hiring policy should be wider, not just internal. Who knows? Maybe I would have stayed in."

After her last contract for Heritage expired, Clarissa returned to the intern route, and found another internship through Young Canada Works (YCW) program, which is funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage. Clarissa's internship was to work for a private media arts foundation for four months. She describes that a YCW internship is often a temporary job that leads nowhere for youth: "you're supposed to only do YCW once, you can do it twice only if the person who's hiring you can prove that there's no one else that matches your skills, a lot of people, they have this one shot deal, and that's it." She knows young people who have had this experience, and have been unable to find other work afterwards. She describes that there are a lot of Emploi Québec jobs in cultural fields, but people who have just finished internships are not eligible for them, because they are not on social assistance. She describes that these jobs that her peers were seeking out and were not able to apply for were not even highly lucrative jobs: "these were $8 or $10 an hour jobs." This was a "major frustration" for them, because they'd just finished a YCW internship, couldn't find any new work, and decided to resort to an $8 or $10 an hour job through Emploi Québec, and they weren't even eligible for it. Fortunately for Clarissa, the foundation she was working for was able to hire her after her YCW internship was finished, and she had a permanent position as a grants officer. Unfortunately, this foundation later stopped distributing grants to artists due to a decrease in their funds, and Clarissa was laid off from her position as grants officer.

Clarissa describes herself as "fed up" with work in cultural organizations at this point, and has now returned to school to do a second Master's degree in a different field, urban planning. She describes that by the time she made this decision, she had unsuccessfully worked for the government, a government-sponsored institution [the museum], and a private foundation. She asks "What are the options?" Beyond this lack of available long-term or permanent employment, Clarissa describes a tension between a desire for independence and creative fulfillment in one's work, which is more readily available at smaller organizations, which are also more prone to collapse, and a desire for stability and permanent employment, which is more readily available at larger institutions where one's work is much less self-directed:

> [There is] not a lot of freedom in what you can do in a large institution, but a large institution offers permanency, but the large institution doesn't offer flexibility in what *you* want to do in your work. I already saw other frustrations coming [when working for the museum.] I don't know what I aspire to here, where I see myself (C. Buchanan, personal interview, June 2009).

This lack of stability and lack of permanent employment are major considerations to grapple with when dealing with youth engagement with the creative industries, and merits attention to what mechanisms can be created for greater stability. The tension that Clarissa experienced between permanence and independence is not unique to her alone, and Chapter 3 offers a fuller discussion of many youths' decision to opt for the "independence" half of this divide in the work that they seek out and create for themselves.

Clarissa feels that her experience is common to many youth seeking out careers in cultural organizations, and many youth have "internship after internship, or low-paid work at institutions such as galleries, and because this work is low-paid, these people have side jobs, such as translation work, but they're happy to be

working for a gallery, but they have to subsidize it through other ways." Nonetheless, Clarissa feels her situation was more fortunate than other people she knows who work in the same field as her: "When I look at other people, I feel that I've been very lucky, though I feel there have been a lot of great injustices. I still feel fortunate that I still had three or four sponsored internships. I got work for the government, and I got work at the museum, and I got work at a private arts organization without being an intern. So I do feel very lucky."

Mapping Youth Engagement with the Creative Industries

Sean, Amy, and Clarissa's experiences point to the successes, frustrations, and disappointments that many youth experience in the creative industries, and also point to areas in which youth could better be supported in their practices. While some of the comments of these three youth point to systemic barriers that create difficulty in accessing employment in the creative industries that need to be addressed at the governmental level, the field of education can also play a role here in better facilitating the life pathways of youth and better equip them to navigate and negotiate their ways through their careers. Before the field of education is able to foster the skills needed to navigate the creative industries, we need a more complete picture than that which currently exists of youth involvement with the creative industries. Scholars are beginning to take note of what Hoechsmann and Low have characterized as a "wildfire of youth cultural production" (2008, p.6), but further work needs to be done to map the implications that this wildfire has for employment trends in the creative industries, and for education policies. Over the last ten years,

the creative industries have become a growing area of research in the academy, as seen in the work of David Hesmondhalgh, Angela McRobbie, Kate Oakley, Stuart Cunningham, Richard Caves, Richard Florida, and John Hartley, amongst others. Coupling this interest is a growing awareness in the field of education that schooling needs to better engage, grapple with, and build young people's creative talents and interests (Buckingham, 2003; Giroux, 1996; Hoechsmann & Low, 2008; Jenkins, 2006a; Sefton-Green, 1999; Willis, 1990). Nonetheless, there is still currently a gap in empirical research between youths' experiences in schools and their experiences of successfully working in the creative industries. This gap means that there is a lack of concrete data about youth engagement in the creative industries; nonetheless, a trend towards small-scale and self-generated involvement in the creative industries can be pieced together from available research.

In his research, Richard Florida (2002) chronicles the rise in "the creative class," or the class of workers who use creative skills in their careers (see Chapter 2 for a fuller discussion of Florida's work). In order to make the claim that this "class" is growing, Florida notes an increasing trend in artistic work over the last century in the United States, commenting that

> The numbers of people making a living from artistic and cultural creativity also expanded dramatically over the course of the past century and particularly since 1950. Professional artists, writers, and performers – so-called 'bohemians' increased from some 200,000 in 1900 to 525,000 in 1950 and to 2.5 million in 1999, an increase of more than 375 percent since 1950. There were roughly 250 bohemians for every 100,000 Americans in 1900, a figure that increased to roughly 350 by 1950. That number crossed 500 in 1980, before reaching 900 for every 100,000 Americans in 1999 (pp.45-46).

Florida notes that his data comes from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, but does not note which Census category of employment he is investigating. In the Canadian

context, the 2006 Census showed that 346,315 Canadians were employed in the Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector of the workforce, but perhaps a more accurate picture of the "bohemians" that Florida describes would involve looking at sub-section of Art, Entertainment, and Recreation section, and looking at the 51, 860 Canadians who declared their employment status as "independent artists, writers, and performers" in 2006, which is roughly a 12% increase from 46,215 people employed in this sector of the workforce in 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2003, 2008). These numbers are small compared to Florida's US figures. Even adjusting for a much smaller population, these figures suggests that Canada has 166 "bohemians" for every 100,000 people, which is a lower number than Florida's 1900 figure. Florida's argument about the magnetic draw of "creative" cities may help explain this discrepancy, as Canadian cities have a shorter history as cosmopolitan/bohemian centers. Moreover, youth engagement in the creative industries may be difficult to capture through examining Census categories as many youth activities may fall outside of the category of "independent artists, writers, and performers" even if they are carving out careers with creative projects in "independent" ways. Angela McRobbie (1999) outlines that for youth, "cultural practice" includes activities such as "cooking, gardening, sports, rambling, 'internetting,' producing fanzines, etc."; these pursuits often become "gainful activities" (p.26). If these are the activities that are shaping the future of creative work, then the category of "artist" that the Census offers is much too narrow to adequately capture trends in youth activities; many Census responders who may fit in Florida's "bohemian" category may no longer classify themselves as artists, writers, or performers, and many of these "bohemians" may not fill out their Census forms at all.

The category of "independent artists, writers, and performers" may not capture all youth engagement with the creative industries and it also may not capture youth activities of engaging with the creative industries while also pursuing other kinds of work. Risa Dickens, who runs an artist network and on-line boutique called Indyish (profiled in Chapter 5), comments that the artists on her Web site are not aiming to "make millions" as they would just

> Like to meet their subsistence level [through earning a living from creative practices] – that's what we want. Just make a living off of [art], that would be the ideal. And they work crazier hours trying to make that happen, working other jobs, trying to make it happen. Especially some of the younger people, working at McDonald's and shit, for like 8 bucks an hour, and then going home and making complex beautiful Celtic traditional wedding rings to try to sell on Indyish because they make jewellery in their spare time, that's all they want to do (R. Dickens, personal interview, April 2009).

Risa's suggestion that young artists are grappling with paid employment to try to support their creative projects until they are able to make a living from their creative projects is supported by other research. In 2007, the Canada Council for the Arts initiated a nation-wide series of forums about issues facing young artists and arts audiences which culminated in a report called *Next Generations of Artistic Leaders and Arts Audiences*. This report found that "arts practitioners are not solely invested in singular aspects of creative practice or sectoral employment. Many participants have multi-disciplinary orientations, and work many different types of jobs to support their creative work" (DECODE, 2007, p.8). In terms of income other than that gained from creative practices,

> Very few participants said they survived from creative activities. Some artists said they felt fortunate to have found paying freelance work in jobs that are related to their field, such as arts instruction, arts administration or providing technical and logistical support to other artists or productions …A small number of participants said they

> worked in fields completely unrelated to the arts sector as a means of supporting themselves (p.14).

This general picture of youth employment and reliance on other sources of income outside of creative work varies province to province. In Alberta,

> Few participants said they lived entirely from their creative work. Most said they either worked jobs in fields unrelated to their practice, or had part or full-time positions working as arts administrators ... Participants noted that rapidly increasing cost-of-living expenses (especially for housing and rehearsal and exhibition space in urban areas) have made it harder for artists and organizations to work in Alberta. Many artists say they feel the pressure to leave Alberta for other parts of the country to build their artistic careers (p.32).

In B.C., "some noted that because of the high cost of housing in British Columbia, particularly in Vancouver and Victoria, artists and arts practitioners are forced to work long hours, often over several jobs to find the means to support basic living costs (p.35). In Newfoundland and Labrador, "others noted that because of the small size of the arts scene, they are often forced to find fulltime work in jobs unrelated to their field. As a result, many participants were frustrated by the fact that their economic situation made them feel as if their practices were being relegated to hobby status" (p.39). Moreover, other research indicates that those working in the arts are more likely than other types of workers to only have part-time work in the their field; the work that artists do in other fields may also influence Census numbers of how people choose to designate their occupations when responding to the Census survey. Hill Strategies Research's analysis of the 2006 Canadian Census data showed that are "few opportunities for full-time work in the arts" as "nearly twice as many artists as other workers (42% vs. 22%) indicated that they worked part-time in 2005" and "artists are employed for fewer weeks per year than other workers. In 2005, 68% of artists worked most of the year (40 to 52 weeks) compared with 77% of the overall

labour force" (2008, p.3). These figures, and those that follow, represent those people who designated "artist" as their status on their Census form; others, especially the young, may not designate their status as such. If they did, these figures would likely be even lower.

While Canadian artists may not find full-time work in their fields, the trend in creative work is towards self-employment: "At 42%, the percentage of artists who are self-employed is six times the self-employment rate in the overall labour force (7%)" (p.3). And while many artists work for themselves, their incomes are much lower than the population as a whole: "The average earnings of self-employed artists ($15,200) are 51% less than the average earnings of all self-employed workers in Canada ($31,000)" (p.3). On the whole, artists earn dramatically less than the average Canadian worker. The average earnings for artists is $22,700, whereas it is $36,300 for the Canadian population as a whole. When comparing median earnings, these discrepancies are heightened: median earnings for artists are $12, 900 whereas they are $26,900 for the Canadian population as whole (Hill Strategy Research, 2008). Beyond this, the Arts/Entertainment/Recreation sector of the Canadian workforce (of which the independent artists category is a sub-sector) has one of the lowest median ages (36.3) of employees in all sectors of the workforce; only Retail Trade and Accommodation and Food Services have lower median ages at 36 and 28.8, respectively (Statistics Canada, 2008), and these types of work are sometimes temporary positions for youth while they are students pursuing training in other fields. The low median age of the Art/Entertainment/Recreation field suggests that the increase in employment in this field in Canada between 2001 and 2006 is an

increase of youth entering into this field rather than more mature workers taking up this line of work later in life, or that there is a predominance of youth working in this field, as individuals may give up this low-income and unstable field as they become middle-aged.

If youth are increasingly seeking out creative work, which is characterized as low-pay and part-time, many implications, from pensions to health care, must be grappled with at the governmental level. The Canadian Conference of the Arts notes that

> The public policy framework still remains firmly rooted in the industrial/agrarian paradigm dominated by the employer/employee relationship and lifelong careers with a single employer. Unfortunately, these realities are largely inconsistent with the concept of the creative economy. In the creative economy, an individual is likely to elect self-employment as the preferred mode of operation, seeking and obtaining income from a variety of sources and activities related to the creative process. This may mean that an individual is required, by virtue of the diversity of activity, to engage in a lifelong continuing reeducation or professional training circuit to ensure that changing technologies or media can be exploited for their creative and income generating potential (2008, p.2).

If youth are entering into this lifelong circuit, governments need to respond so that public policies are more relevant to these experiences, including better facilitating this continuing reeducation and professional training circuit, and being more responsive to the realities of low-income people. It is not the purpose of this dissertation to map out all of the implications of youth work in the creative economy; rather, this dissertation sets out to provide a picture of youth engagement in the creative industries and ask how Canadian cultural policy and education might best support and grow the creative energies, initiative, and work of young people. A complete picture of youth engagement in the creative industries is currently lacking; to this end, this project seeks out relevant fields of research in order to piece together a

more complete picture that can act as starting point for better support of youth practices. Chapter 2 begins this project with an overview of the theoretical underpinnings of research into youth culture and youth practices.

Chapter 2:

Theoretical Contexts of Youth Cultural Production

As cultural policy in nations including England and Canada began to emerge as a new route to solidify national identities (for instance, Tony Blair's emphasis on Britain's "cool" cultural exports, such as Brit Pop, in the era of "Cool Britannia," or the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage's 1999 report *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Being*), so too did research in the social sciences, sociology, and cultural studies begin to map the changing nature of the cultural industries. While some research has noted that work in the cultural industries seems to be an emerging avenue of self-employment for youth (Caves, 2000; Leadbeater & Oakley, 1999; Lloyd, 2006; McRobbie, 1989, 1999), empirical work in the field of youth cultural production is lacking. To this end, it is difficult to precisely map youth engagement in the cultural industries, as "youth" are often not part of the discussion in cultural policy or in research in the cultural industries. In this chapter, I examine existing research from the sometimes disparate fields of research in creative economies, cultural studies, media education, and subculture studies, and examine the possibilities and limitations in the ways that these fields address youth cultural production. Ultimately, connections need to be made between these fields to fully encapsulate and support youth realities, as no one field offers an adequate theoretical framework to register contemporary youth activities in the creative industries. In research in the creative economies, youth activities often not discussed, but when youth is foregrounded in subculture studies, theoretical abstractions prevail over concrete mappings of youth realities and the ways in which subcultural involvement can lead into the realm of work; these concrete mappings are necessary to serve and to better support youth.

We need a theoretical framework that is able to better chart the practical, everyday realities of youth engagement in the creative industries so that the field of education can, in turn, better support youth employment pathways.

Defining the Cultural and Creative Industries

In order to be able to discuss youth engagement with creative projects, we can first turn to the discussions of the "cultural industries" that mostly emerge out of the fields of sociology, economics, and cultural studies. In this literature, there is a certain slippage in usage of the terms "cultural industries" and "creative industries." Galloway and Dunlop (2007) note that "the terminology currently used in creative industries policy lacks rigour and is frequently inconsistent and confusing. The terms 'cultural industries' and 'creative industries' are often used interchangeably; there is little clarity about these terms and little appreciation or official explanation of the difference between the two" (p.17). This slippage is not just a semantic one, as it has larger implications for the nature of the activities which get discussed and encapsulated by the terminology. Galloway and Dunlop (2007) further state that "commentators agree that there must be a strong theoretical basis for any definition [of the cultural industries] used for public policy purposes, not least because this has important consequences for how we measure these industries, and the type of interventions we adopt" (p.17). A further addition to Galloway and Dunlop's comments here is that the way we define the cultural/creative industries also has implications for the nature of the participants who are implicated. According to Stuart Cunningham (2004), "cultural industries" is a term "invented to embrace the

commercial industry sectors (principally film, television, book publishing and music) which also delivered fundamental popular culture to a national population" (p.106). Indeed, the term "cultural industries" generally refers to industrial-scale production. Discussing the cultural industries, David Hesmondhagh (2006) refers to this industrial-scale production and the "project team" that is necessary to carry it out:

> The creative stage of bringing cultural goods to market is carried out by a project team …These include primary creative personnel such as musicians, screenwriters and directors; technical craft workers such as sound engineers, camera operators, copy editors, and so on; owners and executives; marketing and publicity personnel; and, crucially, creative managers, who act as brokers or mediators between, on the one hand, the interests of owners and executives, and those of creative personnel. Examples of such creative managers include A&R staff in the recording industry, commissioning editors in the book industry, magazine editors and film producers (p.227).

When "cultural industries" is used to refer to a heavily commercialized and industrialized sector, youth will not register or warrant attention as players in the field; Hesmondhalgh's description of the "project team" will not be able to encapsulate small-scale, grassroots activities that youth are typically involved with.

Furthermore, in *The Cultural Industries* (2002), Hesmondhalgh defines core cultural industries as advertising and marketing, broadcasting, film industries, internet industries, music industries, print and electronic publishing, and video and computer games. Additionally, he characterizes peripheral cultural industries to include theatre and works of art (pp.12-13). These focal points allow for a broad exploration of change and continuity in the cultural industries with a macro-type emphasis on such concerns as ownership (conglomeration vs. the persistence of small businesses) and government policy (law and regulation). Hesmondhalgh compares the "top 48" cultural companies with Fortune 500 companies to demonstrate that while cultural corporations are increasingly profit-rich, they are not necessary the top money

makers of all types of industry (Exxon Mobil holds this position). Nonetheless, some of the cultural industry activities he researches are heavily-monied, big business types of corporate activities. In distinction to these types of activities, Hesmondhalgh makes reference to the creative industries, which are not included in his purview: "In Europe, the term 'creative industries' is increasingly popular in policy circles as a means of encompassing not only the heavily industrialised and commodified industries which I have called 'cultural industries' but also the more craft-based activities of jewellery making, fashion, furniture, design and household objects and so on" (p.14). In distinction to this European inclusion of craft-based industry under the rubric of 'creative industries,' Hesmondhalgh excises these smaller types of cultural production from his focus. Other commentators have warned against enlarging the term "cultural industries" to "creative industries," as this may dilute an emphasis on culture and foreground a definition of creativity that refers to innovation, which can also been found in science and business:

> Any activity that involves creativity would necessarily be 'creative'. Defining "creative industries" against such a measure is, if nothing else, far too wide to be useful for any purpose. Any innovation – including scientific and technical innovations – of any sort in any industry is creative, and, in such terms, any industry is, therefore, potentially a "creative industry". Conflating cultural creativity with all other forms of creativity fails to take adequate account of important differences between cultural and creative industries (Galloway & Dunlop, 2007, p.19).

My purpose here is not to dilute an emphasis on cultural production to an overly wide definition of creativity, but to use terminology that is able to capture small-scale craft-based activities. McRobbie (2002a, 2002b) notes that these small-scale craft producers are increasingly contracted out to larger cultural industries on a freelance basis; the result is that

> In this new and so-called independent sector (see Leadbeater and Oakley, 1999) there is less and less time left in the long hours culture to pursue 'independent work'. The recent attempts by the large corporations to innovate in this sector means that the independents are, in effect, dependent sub-contracted suppliers (2002b, p.523).

McRobbie is speaking to the situation for cultural producers in the UK, and specifically in London; Chapter 4 will map out the British government's uptake of the creative industries, and the dissertation as a whole will map out the continued trend in the Canadian context towards small-scale independent youth cultural production.

It is not only the British government that has celebrated the potential of the creative industries to generate economic growth: Richard Florida is the most well known commentator to link the creative industries with economic development. His definition of creativity in the workforce in *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002) falls into the pitfall that Galloway and Dunlop outline above: it is so broad as to include anyone who engages in problem-solving on the job, including nurses, business people, educators, lawyers, scientists, and engineers. Cultural production is not part of Florida's definition of creativity, as his definition involves instead the ability to synthesize (p.31). Dealing with defining creativity in a similar way to Galloway and Dunlop above, Julian Sefton-Green (2000) notes that "it is important to remember that creativity can be used to describe creative thinking, creative work in the physical sciences or even in the field of business – entrepreneur's [sic] are often considered 'creative'" (p.8). On the one hand, this definition of creativity is actually quite inclusive, and moves creativity away from a 19th century Romantic vision of isolated genius that is only available to a select few. In opposition to this Romantic notion, Florida defines creativity as a social process that is based in a variety of skills:

"Creativity is not the province of a few select geniuses who can get away with breaking the mold because they possess superhuman talents. According to Boden, who sums up a wealth of research: 'creativity draws crucially on our ordinary abilities. Noticing, remembering, seeing, speaking, hearing, understanding language, and recognizing analogies: all these talents of Everyman are important'" (p.32). While this definition may be more inclusive and seemingly include more "average" skills and people, in practice, Florida does not deploy this definition in ways that lessen persistent social problems and injustices. Florida's delineation of "new" social classes actually points to the persistence of "creativity" being only available to the privileged. Florida champions the creative class' creative ethos, which involves bridging the gap between work and play, as a driving economic force, but the statistics he compiles suggest that the creative class is not actually the fastest growing sector of work, as the service class, which now works all hours to cater to the flexible work schedules of the creative class, actually forms the biggest chunk of the workforce (see Florida 2002, fig. 4.3, p 75). The drudgery of the service class may be less exciting to write about, and Florida elides doing so by suggesting that his cleaning lady and hair dresser are actually not members of the service class because they use creative skills in rearranging his furniture and cutting his hair. Florida suggests that these service industry jobs are choices that are outside of economic concerns, noting that his hair stylist drives a BMW, and his cleaning lady's husband drives a Porsche. While Florida does acknowledge that some people are "stuck for life in menial jobs as food-service help, janitors, nursing home orderlies, security guards and delivery drivers" (p.71), comments such as those above about luxury cars, or other remarks – that highly educated immigrants driving cabs will soon move into the creative class, that

students working in service industry jobs will also soon move up, that some entrepreneurial people working in the service industry will open restaurants and lawn and garden service businesses – undermine the seriousness of his concern for the harsh realities that he alludes to. These comments also weaken his overall argument, as these positions are actually more predominant than creative class positions, and so perhaps warrant more attention. In the end, Florida's concept of the creative class is not useful for charting youth engagement in the creative industries as it is much too broad in its inclusive aspects that move away from cultural production and much too sweeping in its ignorance of persistence social problems that underlie creative work.

Putting Definitions of Creativity into Policy

While Florida's notion of the creative class as economic engine has excited many municipal policy makers, we need to be cautious about taking up Florida's definition of creativity at the policy level. Youth cultural production increasingly makes connections between art, commerce, and community, but the Florida definition of creativity celebrates the ability to innovate as driving the economy. Galloway and Dunlop (2007) comment "public support for culture simply recognises that it provides public benefits that cannot be captured through markets, and the currently fashionable way of viewing the cultural sector as part of the wider creative economy simply subsumes it within an economic agenda to which it is ill-suited" (p.29). We need a model that registers more than the economic merits of the creative industries; Florida's rubric of creativity forgets cultural production altogether, and

champions the role of creativity (innovation) in driving the economy. Throsby (2008) argues that

> It can be suggested that cultural policy is distinctive precisely because it is *not* just economic policy, but relates directly to the legitimate social and cultural objectives that democratic governments are elected to pursue. Too strong a concentration on the economic contribution of the cultural industries may shift the focus away from the achievement of desirable social and cultural goals. This problem can be cast as one of getting the balance right between the instrumental role of the arts and culture in producing economic and social outcomes, and their essential cultural purpose (pp.229-230).

Other policy concerns have been raised by Hesmondhalgh and Pratt (2005), who have commented that the muddling of "cultural" and "creative" industries in policy-making results in poor policy:

> The cultural industries have not traditionally found much of place in mainstream economics, where they have generally been considered to be of peripheral importance. In more recent turn, though, some economists and sociologists have come to see the cultural (or creative) industries as either already or potentially central to contemporary economic life. Yet, in many cases, these analyses are based on dubiously broad definitions of culture … Software design of many kinds is blurred with recording; new cafés, restaurants and clubs are merged with television businesses. The result has been a tremendous amount of inflated commentary about the significance of the cultural and creative industries that has often fed, and certainly not counteracted, hype and misunderstanding on the part of policy in the name of the cultural industries (Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005, p.8)

My concern here is not to draw an overly broad picture of cultural activities by enlarging the definition of "culture," or "creativity" such that these terms become generic referents for innovative ideas; there is a need to maintain a focus on cultural production as the basis for a definition of creativity. When discussing youth, though, there is a need to forward a definition of "creative industries" that enlarges a definition of "industry" such that it allows for an encapsulation of small-scale youth cultural activities—activities that may not presently have significant economic

impacts, but do nonetheless contain significance for discussions of trends in youth employment and life pathways. We also need to be able to register more other types of impacts, such as sustainable community development. Youth fail to register when investigating the types of cultural industries that Hesmondhalgh describes because increasingly youths' creative work and employment fall outside of his areas of research. This inability to register youth activities would seem to point to a shortcoming in discussions of economic trends, and these economic considerations often form a focus (if not the main focus) in academic research on cultural industries (see, for example, Potts & Cunningham, 2008; Towse, 1997, 2003; see also the previous discussion of Richard Florida, 2002). If the activities of those entering into the labour market are not taken into consideration, especially if these activities demonstrate significant changes in employment patterns, this oversight may signal an inability to accurately discuss long-term economic trends. While there might be oversights in economic models of the creative industries in their inability to register youth activities, we need not only to offer a corrective to these economic models by suggesting the inclusion of youth, but also move past a purely economic model and towards also registering social outcomes, including community development as well as the cultural purpose and personal and public benefits of the creative industries, as stated by Galloway and Dunlop (2007) and Throsby (2008) above.

Theoretical Models of Small-Scale Production

One of the difficulties of registering youth activities in the creative industries emerges from a lack of theoretical models to discuss small-scale creative industries.

Raymond Williams' (1981) discussion of the social relations of cultural production is sometimes evoked by contemporary analysts of the cultural industries: Williams chronicles four phases of cultural production: artisanal (handmade arts and crafts), post-artisanal (artisanal production supported by a patronage), market professional (19th century model of emerging ownership over one's cultural production, including copyright and royalties), and corporate professional (employee in a company that produces creative goods). With this last phase of the corporate professional, Williams refers to the corporatization of the cultural industries, which results in salaried professional work and industrialized production. Williams notes the survival of older, artisanal methods of production in "non-market" areas of cultural production, such as those that are supported by public subsidy. If we want to theorize contemporary youth cultural production, this opposition between corporate and artisanal cannot capture a small-scale entrepreneurial model that would be more appropriate to talk about contemporary youth activities, as they no longer occur in an autonomous sphere of "art for art's sake" that Williams' post-artisanal model suggests. Furthermore, the corporate professional model is not appropriate to describe small-scale self-generated youth cultural activities, but neither is it appropriate to revert to the 19th century market professional model of cultural production that Williams' rubric provides. As will be discussed below, the impact of the digitization of cultural production means that contemporary youth are fully immersed in a 21st century world of cultural production, so we need new theoretical models to grapple with understanding these new modes of youth cultural production.

Hesmondhalgh (2006) discusses Williams' contributions to theorizing cultural production, but looks for more useful theoretical models in Pierre Bourdieu's work

on cultural production in *The Field of Cultural Production* (1993) and *The Rules of Art* (1996). Bourdieu's theory of cultural production debunks the aura of the creative genius; instead, Bourdieu looks at the field of cultural production as being characterized by differing levels of power and capital that inform various positions within the field. While these concepts remain useful, Hesmondhalgh critiques Bourdieu's failure to address large-scale cultural production, as he prioritizes small-scale or restricted cultural production. He notes that Bourdieu's characterization of the small-scale field relies on an overly polarized opposition to large-scale production; for Bourdieu, the restricted field is one of autonomy from the forces of power and commerce:

> Bourdieu often writes of small-scale production as oriented towards the production of 'pure' artistic products, and mass production as oriented towards the making of 'commercial' cultural goods. He is also inclined to talk of the field of small-scale production as 'production for producers': in rejecting the market, he implies with this phrase, cultural producers in the restricted sub-field are left pretty much to talk to each other (Hesmondhalgh, 2006, p.214).

For Bourdieu, small-scale cultural production is "pure" because it is non-commercial "art for art's sake" that emerges from the avant-garde bohemia. As discussed in Chapter 1, this binary between "authenticity" and "incorporation" in cultural production is oversimplified and is no longer relevant to discuss the mechanisms of grassroots cultural production: small-scale cultural production is no longer the exclusive realm of the avant-garde bohemia and no longer occurs in opposition to the mass market. Bourdieu suggests that small-scale production is non-commercial production that rejects the mass market, but Hesmondhalgh offers a corrective that notes the increasing interpenetration of small-scale and industrialized production:

> We are seeing a proliferation of sub-fields of restricted production, alongside the growth of large-scale production, as the field of cultural

> production as a whole grows larger and more complex. One way of putting this is that there is now a huge amount of cultural production taking place on the boundaries between sub-fields of mass and restricted production; or, perhaps better still, that restricted production has become introduced *into* the field of mass production (p.222).

Here, Hesmondhalgh discusses small-scale production being folded into mass production, such as large film studios taking on independent production companies. However, the interpenetration of small-scale and industrialized production also means the digitization of small-scale production and development of entrepreneurial knowledge (marketing, distribution) in the field of restricted production. There is a lack of available research to chart these changes in small-scale production away from the insular "production for producers" field that shuns economic capital that Bourdieu suggests; Hesmondhalgh (2006) notes that "restricted production has been neglected by Anglo-American media and cultural studies" (p.229).

Registering Youth: Redefining Cultural Activities

Angela McRobbie is one researcher who makes connections between the creative industries and youth activities, and characterizes the involvement of youth in self-generated small-scale economies as a growing and significant trend. She states her interest in "the future of work in the creative sector" as well as "the growth in self-employment" of which an increasing part is "cultural work" (1999, ix). Thus, her investigation is into "small scale cultural economies and livelihoods upon which so many people now depend for a living" (1999, x). This investigation entails an understanding of the ways in which what were once leisure activities have become sources of income for youth: "we have to consider cultural practice for profit or

merely for livelihood or as a supplement to the dole, as now taking over a space in people's lives which we once would have called hobbies or activities. In the context of unemployment these frequently become 'gainful' activities, i.e. cooking, gardening, sports, rambling, 'internetting,' producing fanzines, etc." (1999, p.26). Ultimately, McRobbie's definition of "cultural work" that emerges from her list of gainful activities is much broader than Hesmondhalgh's definition of the creative industries (i.e. crafts, jewellery, furniture-making) that are outside his purview. Here, McRobbie suggests that youth are turning towards these activities as lines of work because other types of more stable and more permanent work may no longer be available, but youth are also turning to these activities as lines of work because they are not interested in pursuing careers in more permanent but less personally meaningful areas. McRobbie suggests that this type of self-generated work is a response to undesirable types of work in the service industry, but many young people may be qualified for work in areas beyond the service sector, and choose to pursue creative work instead. McRobbie states: "what we should now be talking about instead is a sprawling sector of micro-economies of culture which now traverses the boundaries of social class, ethnicity and gender. Many young working class people now become self-employed in the cultural field (as stylists, make-up artists, or by setting up club nights, or making dance tracks at home in their bedrooms) as an escape from the inevitability of unemployment, or in preference to an unrewarding job in the service sector" (1999, p.27). Québec's youth policy document, *Bringing Youth into Québec's Mainstream*, notes the changes in employment patterns away from permanent full-time work, and suggests that this change means a prolongation of the period of youth:

> The period of youth—meaning the series of transitions that lead to full adulthood—is tending to last longer and longer. Life paths are no longer linear and are increasingly characterized by a back-and-forth movement between education, the job market, apartment living—alone, as a couple, or with other tenants—and the family home. This trend is being accentuated by the longer time spent at school and the problems getting established in working life, both of which are related to the changing job market …Young working people are now faced with conditions totally different from those of the last thirty years. Since the mid-1970s, the job market has been characterized by a decline in full-time salaried employment, for instance standard employment, and a growth in non-standard forms of employment, for instance part-time work, temporary work and self-employment. This change in the kind of work accessible to young people is directly affecting the working conditions they can aspire to. As well, social programs and labour laws do not always make allowance for these new forms of work (2001, pp.16-17).

If the period of youth is being prolonged, this means we need more attention to youth at the governmental level, but Chapter 3 will chronicle a continued lack of attention to youth in cultural policies. For many young people, self-employment is on the rise not necessarily because of a lack of available lucrative work, but because this type of work is not alluring. The "micro-economies" of their self-employed activities and the back and forth between education, job market, and self-employment would not be captured under Hesmondhalgh's core or peripheral cultural industries; nonetheless, the navigation and negotiation of government grants, part-time work, loans, and parental assistance that enables the above-mentioned activities can result in stable careers and is indeed "the future of work" for a certain demographic of young people. However, empirical data and policy-oriented research on this navigation and negotiation process is lacking in academic research, and more empirical data is needed to better chart this navigation and negotiation process such that youth needs can register more loudly at the policy level.

The Business of Bohemia

As discussed above, there is a lack of research into the mechanisms of small-scale cultural production. Some research exists concerning the nature of artist activities; as discussed in Chapter 1, not all youth cultural producers would classify themselves as "artists," but this research may nonetheless illuminate some of the logistics of small-scale cultural activities. Following Richard Florida, Richard Lloyd (2006) discusses the catalyzing effect that artists/bohemians have on economic development through the gentrification of neighbourhoods, and comments that "this means that artists matter a lot in today's economy but not as producers of art" (p.17). I am interested in these "bohemians" not for their ability to lure "real business"; rather, what are the terms of the business of bohemia itself? How do these people earn an income? What types of training and education is necessary to be a successful "bohemian"? Is this really the future of work, as Angela McRobbie suggests? Florida's concept of the "creative ethos" is that bohemian values have merged with business ones, such that work and leisure are no longer separable as work becomes play. He discusses this in terms of changes in corporate attitudes, but a forgotten counterpoint to this discussion would be the merging of work and play in the "bohemian" world, as success in this field requires industriousness and logistical know-how rather than creativity alone.

While Florida imagines that artists' traditional opposition to commerce has evaporated, Richard Lloyd argues that these distinctions may have lessened because the notion of opposition to the "mainstream" is no longer relevant because "an imagined mainstream … is anachronistic, as the old promises of career and social security under the terms of the Fordist corporation and the welfare state have

increasingly evaporated (p.239). As also seen in McRobbie's analysis, working as an artist has become less of an oppositional choice, as the alternatives are no longer secure. Lloyd examines the nature of bohemian work by looking at the activities of artists in the Chicago neighbourhood of Wicker Park, commenting that this neighbourhood's

> Neo-bohemia thus confounds traditional conceptions of urban subculture, which offer the alluring image of a counter-hegemonic resistance to capitalist domination. While proponents of this view typically concede that such subcultural innovations may be co-opted by capitalist interests in arenas like fashion and media (in the process robbing them of their subversive intent), this is presumed to happen after some more pristine moment. But this division does not capture the actual fluidity of the boundaries between the articulation of cultural innovation and strategies of accumulation. Rather than looking at artists as resistant subculture, I became compelled to think of artists as useful labor, and to ask how their efforts are harnessed on behalf of interests that they often sincerely profess to despise (p.239).

Looking at the interpenetrations of art and commerce, Lloyd suggests that bohemian labor is harnessed on behalf of others and there is a fluidity in the boundaries of the two as the offbeat appearance of artists is useful for certain types of business, such as funky cafés, bars, and restaurants, and bohemians provide both the labour of many service positions in certain neighbourhoods, and the business for these service industries, as they frequent the establishments where friends work in an elaborate system of networking and maintaining social position. For Lloyd, bohemians do not stand apart from the world of commerce and shun economic capital in favour of symbolic capital, as in Bourdieu's outline of small-scale cultural production. These findings offer a small entry into understanding the business of bohemia, and hint at the importance of personal networks for sustaining creative work.

While we have heard from McRobbie and Lloyd that youth involvement in small-scale creative industries may be due to a lack of other types of more stable

work, Richard Caves (2000) notes that "most persons who credibly aspire to artistic careers have skills and qualities that fit them for success in other occupations" (p.29), but most artists postpone the "serious career" in another occupation until middle age, and this may help to explain the relatively young age of independent artists, writers, and performers in Canada's 2006 Census that were discussed in Chapter 1. Caves' work investigates the business of art, and his work may offer some further explanations about how the micro-economies of art function, especially under the rubric of his discussion of the conditions of "simple" creative goods, or goods that are produced by one person (i.e. art work, novel, musical recording). Following Williams' (1981) model of the corporate professional, Hesmondhalgh (2002) comments that the second half of the twentieth century saw a rise in the "complex cultural industries," in which creative projects involve multiple people working at different levels, as in the "project team" discussed above. However, when discussing youth cultural production, one youth may serve all the roles that Hesmondhalgh includes in his "project team": primary creative personnel, technical craft worker, owner, marketing and publicity personnel, and manager. This suggests a return to work in the simple cultural industries in new kinds of ways and configurations: youth are opting out of working in "film" to start up their own ventures instead – they are on their own in the sense that they are working away from large corporations, but often seek out other like-minded people as allies and co-creators; personal networks and collaborations are often imperative for the success of these small-scale projects. In terms of "simple" creative goods, Caves emphasizes that those working in the creative industries, especially the visual arts, are highly educated people, but there are less opportunities for income-earning from art than there are qualified people. To

this end, Caves discusses the importance of agents and managers, who function as gatekeepers. While writing in 2000, Caves still relies on very traditional categories of cultural production (visual arts, performing arts, writing, musical recordings), and these types of activities do not quite capture McRobbie's suggestion that "the future of work" may be in activities such as 'internetting.' In fact, Caves' work on simple creative goods makes no reference to the implications that the digitization of media has had on cultural production. This problem is most apparent in terms of his discussions of musical recordings, as Caves overstates the importance of securing a manager in order to secure a record deal: the Soulja Boy anecdote in Chapter 1 shows that for many youth, managers are no longer necessary due to on-line forums that can be used to create a fanbase, such as YouTube and MySpace; record deals themselves may become obsolete with trends towards self-released albums. Lloyd and Caves' work offer some points of entry to charting the business of bohemia, but further research needs to be done on the nature of small-scale production.

Digital Media and Cultural Production

"Simple" creative goods may have lost some of the "simplicity" that Caves ascribes to them due to the impact of the digitization of cultural production and the impact of the Internet on distribution and networking. Hesmondhalgh (2002) comments that digital technologies, including samplers, sequencers, and MIDI, have had a substantial impact on music-making since the early 1980s. He asks "has digitalization allowed 'ordinary' consumers more easily to become producers?" (p.200) and "have these various technologies opened up access to cultural production

and circulation, and greater choice for consumers? Have the barriers between production and consumption been eroded? Has digitilisation produced greater creativity and innovation?" Hesmondhalgh replies that the answers "vary across the very different applications. Digital music technologies have been the subject of unjustified fears regarding their implications for music-making; on the other hand, they have been seen as more subversive and transformative than they actually were" (p.229). Digital music technologies may not be "subversive," but may be said to be democratizing in terms of opening up possibilities for a greater number of people to act as cultural producers. In terms of the first question cited above, "has digitalization allowed 'ordinary' consumers more easily to become producers?", Hesmondhalgh seems to implicitly answer yes, but the relationship between digital media and the democratization of cultural production needs to be more definitive stated, especially vis à vis youth cultural production. Hesmondhalgh draws on Paul Théberge's work on "'the hyphenated musician' – the singer-songwriter-producer-engineer-musician-sound designer" (pp.221-2) who works out of home studios in bedrooms, dens, or basement rec rooms (p.234), and is able to do so due to the digitization of music recording technologies; this further suggests the combining of all of the roles in Hesmondhalgh's project team into one. Rupa Huq (2006) comments that youth have more opportunities to become cultural producers rather than merely act as cultural consumers through the advent of democratizing technologies, such as Cubase. This digital recording software, and other like it, such as Acid Pro and Pro Tools, are not technically free, but are easily (illegally) downloadable, and this is currently producing a more dramatic change in music-making than the digital technologies of sampling and sequencing that Hesmondhalgh

references, as they allow "ordinary consumers" to write and record music in their bedrooms without spending any money, and as such open up avenues of who can make a viable career in music, and how. For example, Soulja Boy, discussed in Chapter 1, recorded his first album at home with FruityLoops—widely available and extremely easy to use digital recording software. In a more local and small-scale context, formerly Montréal-based musician Merrill Garbus, known as tUnE-YaRdS, self-recorded her debut album with a borrowed digital field recorder from Concordia University, and mixed and arranged this album with Audacity, a free open-source audio editing software. This album was later released by 4AD, a large British independent label that has released such seminal acts as The Pixies. Reporting this record deal, Pitchfork.com commented that "Merrill Garbus … makes lo-fi, home-recorded weirdo folk that sounds like it was recorded with a Talkboy because it practically was" (Dombal, 2009). The digitization of media has not only democratized the music industry, as digitization has affected aspects of production, promotion, and distribution in the creative industries in general. For example, the M60 film festival, one of Sean Michaels' creative projects mentioned in Chapter 1, operates under the assumption that anyone is able to make a film, and this assumption is only possible due to the digitization of film. One of the festival's organizers, Toby Harper, says: "'the idea is if someone like me can make a movie, just about anyone else can, too. Trust me!'" (Brownstein, 2009a). Because this festival assumes anyone is able to make a film, it is open to all: filmmakers register to make a film on a first-come, first-served basis. There are no fees to register, and no prizes or judges. All films are screened at the final event, and the purpose of the festival is the creation of the films themselves by "ordinary" people. Brownstein (2009b) calls M60

"the most democratic of film fests." Because of this example and countless others, the impact of digital media must be taken into consideration in any complete discussion of the current realities of youth cultural production. The M60 example may not refer to a lucrative scheme or an employment opportunity, but nonetheless paints a picture of an environment of low-stakes cultural production within which many youth are immersed, and this environment may have implications for employment pathways that they choose to follow. Youth are often involved in these low-stakes types of cultural production not only at home in bedrooms, in front of computers, but are also increasingly immersed in digital forms of cultural production through the rise of media education and arts education courses in schools. As we will see below, these aspects of school curricula often build on many youths' skills in digital production, which, as seen here, has democratized cultural production. However, while schools are responding to the rise of these types of skills through media education courses, the formal education system has yet to fully grapple with the fact that these low-stakes kinds of cultural production are more than passing hobbies, and for many youth, these pursuits are increasingly becoming desired employment pathways.

Implications for Education: Creativity, Employment, Training, and Critical Literacy

Given the interest in the field of education in the life pathways of youth, one would assume that education would respond to these changing parameters of youth cultural production and employment. Indeed, the impact of digital media on youth cultural production has been taken up by those working in media education, and this often results in discussions of why and how creative work should be taught and

evaluated. Julian Sefton Green (2000) chronicles the changing reasons why creative work is valued in school curricula, and notes that psychological perspectives emphasize children's personal development, cultural perspectives emphasize the ability of the arts to teach empathy and insight, cultural transmission perspectives emphasize how creative work teaches "appreciation of a society's literary and artistic heritage" (p.4), and vocational perspectives emphasize how creative work teaches skills that are desired in the workforce, such as "team building and negotiation skills" (p.4). Current rhetoric around creative work in media education emphasizes the cultural perspectives of producing citizens who are equipped to participate in modern society though the instruction of digital arts in schools. While creative work has long been taught in a variety of fields (i.e. creative writing in English, art class, music class, etc.), media educators now suggests that "multimedia 'digital creations'" (Sefton Green, 2000, p.2) should be taught across the curriculum rather than in one isolated subject, and that this form of cultural production is increasingly important in schools to mend the 'digital divide'—not between those who merely possess computers and other technologies and those who do not, but between those who are developing relevant skills and aptitudes through their exposure to these digital technologies, are those who are lagging behind in this regard. To this end, much of the discussion in media education research involves defining 21st century citizenry as the ability to fully engage in modern culture, and the ability to critically read and produce media are being marked as skills which define academic and future professional success. Media education is not seen as a means to train future camera operators and magazine editors, but is seen as a means to develop an engaged and

active civic body; perhaps an amalgamation of the two perspectives is needed to fully grapple with contemporary youth cultural production.

This 'media production as preparation for civic life' line of thinking suggests a reevaluation of creativity along lines that are reminiscent of what we have previously seen from Florida. Buckingham (2003) comments that this reevaluation of creativity necessitates moving away from a Romantic notion of artistic genius, and towards a version of creativity that recognizes "the social, collaborative dimensions of creative production; of the complex relationships between 'creative expression' and 'technical skills'; and … the importance of reflection and self-evaluation" (p.128). The difference between this definition and Florida's, cited above, is that Buckingham retains a vision of cultural production as integral to defining creativity. To work away from notions of isolated individual creative genius (which relies on notions of "inspiration," not teachable skills,) Sefton Green (2000) conceptualizes production as a collective activity that involves dialogue: creativity becomes defined as a social process rather than an individual act. Henry Jenkins (2006a) also defines creativity as emerging out of social processes, and earmarks appropriation, or remaking and extending previous media content (as in fan fiction or sampling), but notes that "this is not how we generally talk about creativity in schools" (p.32), where the notion of individual effort and success is still retained, and "the tendency is to discuss artists as individuals who rise upon or stand outside any aesthetic tradition" (p.32). While the field of media education may be thinking through the rationales and execution of digital arts education, Jenkins' comments suggest a disjuncture between this conversation and models of arts education that remain in some school systems, and

also suggest the need for continued work so that schools meet youths' needs and realities with regards to cultural production.

Research in media education also recognizes the extent to which youth are already engaged in cultural production on an informal, everyday level outside of their school lives. Julian Sefton Green and Vivian Reiss (1999) assert that the home (and not the school) is the key site of cultural production, and educators need "to find ways of developing the knowledge about culture and digital production brought from the home to school" (p.3). Jenkins (2006a) suggests that it is Internet-based affinity spaces rather than schools that foster and nurture digital cultural production skills. He reports that the Pew Internet & American Life Project study conducted in 2005 found that

> More than one-half of all teens have created media content, and roughly one-third of teens who use the Internet have shared content that they produced. In many cases, these teens are actively involved in what we are calling participatory cultures. A participatory culture is a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one's creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices (p.3).

For Jenkins, forms of participatory culture include "expressions" which include "producing new creative forms, such as digital sampling, skinning and modding, fan videomaking, fan fiction writing, zines, mash-ups" and "circulations" which include shaping the flow of media (such as podcasting and blogging) (p.3). These "expressions" are not things that would be found in Hesmondhalgh's definitions of the cultural industries, but they are important activities to recognize if they are indeed to become the basis of, as McRobbie suggests, the "future of work." While Jenkins does not make connections between "expressions" and employment, the anecdote of Sean Michaels' experiences with *Said the Gramophone* leading into a career as a writer

in Chapter 1 is one example of the connection between creative projects and employment.

The Question of Audience

While the digital cultural production activities discussed above may seem to be open to all, the questions of access and audience remain pertinent ones when discussing the parameters of youth cultural production. How can youth find networks to foster the creation of their cultural production, and how can they find audiences for their cultural production? Jenkins (2006a) champions the skill of networking, as networks not only foster cultural production but also provide an audience for its end product:

> Many youth are creating independent media productions, but only some learn how to be heard by large audiences. Increasingly, young artists are tapping networks of fans or gamers with the goal of reaching a broader readership for their work. They create within existing cultural communities not because they were inspired by a particular media property, but because they want to reach that property's audience of loyal consumers. Young people are learning to link their websites together in web-rings in part to increase the visibility of any given site and also to increase the profile of the group. Teachers are finding that students are often more motivated if they can share what they create with a larger community (p.51).

Similar to Jenkins, Levine (2007) argues that media production will enhance the civic engagement of youth, but Levine also stresses that students "must find appropriate audiences for their work in a crowded media environment dominated by commercial products" (p.119). In kind, Hesmondhalgh (2002) notes that the seemingly utopian democratizing potential of the Internet was lessened by the professionalization and commercialization of its content producers. While the Internet might suggest a level

playing field for all to participate, much web content is never viewed. Jenkins suggests that youth find audiences amongst affinity groups that share the same interests, but Levine notes the problems of finding audiences for youth cultural work, and argues that "many adolescents do not belong to tight affinity groups, differentiated from the mass youth population" (p.131). If youth have to "learn how to be heard" as Jenkins suggests above, how can educators teach this skill? Levine (2007) suggests creating "highly interactive, gamelike environments in which youth can express public views and do civic work" (p.131); expanding audiences by "marketing youth products by organizing face-to-face events" (p.131); and enabling students "to create digital media products with relatively low investments of time and expertise" (p.132). On this last note, Buckingham (2003) also advocates that

> Production should be both frequent and recursive – and with the growing accessibility of the technology, this is increasingly becoming a realistic possibility. Rather than leading up to the Big Production number (as is the case in some Media Studies syllabuses), students should be engaging in practical work on a regular basis, both in the form of longer projects and in frequent, small-scale activities, not all of which should be assessed (p.137).

Buckingham and Levine's suggestions about the appropriate scale of media production further suggest a debunking of idealized notions of creativity, and a reintegration of creativity into everyday practice. Buckingham's small-scale projects are a way for him to close what he sees as a "dichotomy between 'skills' and 'creativity' and that has tended to characterize debates about media production" (p.134) or "approaches that prioritize the mastery of technical skills and the 'grammar' of dominant media forms … and approaches that emphasize self-expression and open-ended exploration" (p.131). These approaches need to be integrated and executed together, as a final move away from Romantic notions of

creativity that still crystallize around notions of self-expression and "giving" students "voice," which often results in uninterrogated process and product. If students are to find cultural production satisfying, they need to practice skills and self expression in small-scale ways that find audiences. While this approach does not assume that all students will carry on with a career in the creative industries, it could well equip those who do.

The Question of Access

While many commentators have raised important concerns that these types of home-based skills in digital media are not open to all, Jenkins states that home-based media productions are not the sole privilege of white suburban males. The Pew Internet & American Life Project study found that

> Urban youth (40 percent) are somewhat more likely than their suburban (28 percent) or rural (38 percent) counterparts to be media creators. Girls aged 15-17 (27 percent) are more likely than boys their age (17 percent) to be involved with blogging or other social activities online. The Pew researchers found no significant differences in participation by race-ethnicity (Jenkins, 2006a, p.6).

However, a comparison of different groups (rural, suburban, urban, gendered, ethnic) is unable to show that there remains problems of access and involvement within these groups. Furthermore, Hesmondhalgh (2002) comments on the potentials of the Internet to change patterns of consumption and production, but also notes that these changes are happening in limited parts of the globe:

> Digital networks have, to a limited extent, altered existing social relations of production and consumption. They have produced huge amounts of small-scale cultural activity. They have enabled new ways for people to communicate with each other. They have provided mechanisms to enhance political activism. The internet is full of material that is arcane,

> bizarre, witty, profane, as well as the inept, the mundane and the banal. These many minor forms of subversion, insubordination and skepticism don't cancel out the enormous concentrations of power in the cultural industries. But they do, I think, represent a *disturbance*. The problem is that this disturbance of existing relations of cultural production and consumption has happened mainly within a very specific section of the world's population (p.214).

Question of access may shape who creates media content, but questions of segregation may also shape who views these creations. One of the problems that Levine cites in finding audiences for youth cultural production is that this creative work is often ignored even by youths' own peers, and that it is not seen outside of the immediate group of friends. Levine comments that youth need to be made more aware of each other, across friendship groups, as "there are limits to any strategy that gives kids online opportunities without changing their lifeworlds. Factors such as segregation and stratification are powerful determinants of how young people use technology. I do not believe that youth media can be fully satisfactory until young people's communities become more democratic" (p.133). While Jenkins cites statistics that seem to show a lack of discrepancy in creation of media content across different groups, he also notes a "participation gap" in "unequal access to the opportunities, experiences, skills, and knowledge that will prepare youth for full participation in the world of tomorrow" (2006a, p.3). What to do about this gap remains an open-ended and unanswered question in his report, as he asks but does not answer "how do we ensure that every child has access to the skills and experiences needed to become a full participant in the social, cultural, economic, and political future of our society?" (p.18). Surely, to be a full participant also means to be employed, but links between cultural production and employment are not ones that Jenkins directly makes. However, responding to youth realities means that these

links between cultural production, employment, and community development are ones that researchers need to forge.

At the Crossroads of Education and Cultural Studies: Henry Giroux's Uptake of the Youth Question

While the field of education demonstrates an interest in youth engagement with cultural production through examinations of the rise in digital media skills, the field of education also takes up questions of youth life pathways though an examination of how questions of power shape youth realities, most notably in the work of Henry Giroux. Giroux's investigation takes on interdisciplinary dimensions and intersects with the field of cultural studies, and some of his conceptual underpinnings of the category of youth are reminiscent of the work on subculture studies that began in England at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham (CCCS) in the mid 1970s.

The landmark work of early CCCS research is *Resistance through Rituals*, published in 1976; this work examines working class subcultures in England with the assumption that outward displays of subcultural affiliation (i.e. dress) are symbolic of class-based politically resistant sentiments and possibilities. In the first chapter of this work, Hall, Clarke, Jefferson and Roberts chronicle the

> Structural difference between the material position, outlook and everyday life-experience of the different classes. These discrepancies (contradictions) in situation, values and action then provide the real material and historical basis – under the right conditions – for a more developed class strategies of open resistance, struggle, and for counter-hegemonic strategies of rupture and transformation. The convergence of these various strategies of negotiation by a subordinate class in a more sustained class politics requires, of course, mobilisation, politicisation, and organization (1976/2006, p.32).

One of the main critiques of this work is that practical everyday realities of youth are ignored in favour of championing larger trajectories of counter-hegemonic struggle that may say more about the researchers' own political orientations than they do about the circumstances of youth realities. The legacy of this work is that youth gets mobilized as a prism through which to see social change and social problems, and empirical studies give way to theoretical abstractions. Even in research that is aware of the mobilization of youth as a trope, there is an analysis of the way youth gets used as a trope, resulting in a twice-removed metanarrative of youth (see, for example, Hebdige, 1988). Another problematic legacy of subculture studies is that "youth" gets mobilized as an overly broad category, even if only certain types of youth were actually been discussed, which according to McRobbie (2000) and others, results in a "male connotation of youth" (p.26), though a white and working-class connotation of youth should also be noted. As early CCCS work has been revisited by the researchers themselves and other commentators, this early work's conceptualization of youth has been critiqued because of its tendency towards conceiving of youth in overly dualistic ways. Some of these binaries include simplified divides between street culture and domestic culture, between authenticity and incorporation, and between the oppositional and the mainstream, and these binaries result in a privileging of working class males' "resistance" to the point that these types of activities come to stand in for the category of "youth." Indeed, McRobbie (1994) has commented that "youthfulness became virtually synonymous with subculture" (p.159) due to subculture studies' inability to register the activities of non-subculturally-affiliated youth.

While the early CCCS work sees subculture as a symbolic and "magical resolution" to problems of class inequality and power disparities experienced by working class youth, it also sees this "symbolic" resistance as largely ineffectual:

> Their highly ritualised and stylized form suggests that they were also attempts at a solution to that problematic experience: a resolution which, because pitched at the symbolic level, was fated to fail. The problematic of a subordinate class experience can be 'lived through,' negotiated or resisted; but it cannot be resolved at that level by those means. There is no subcultural career for the working class lad, no solution in the subcultural milieu, for problems posed by the key structuring experiences of class (Clarke, Hall, Jefferson, & Roberts, 1976/2006, p.35).

The emphasis on "fated to fail" activities does not suggest that the tone of early CCCS work is necessarily fatalistic; rather, the privileging of working class "resistance" means that research on youth activities focuses on the symbolic. "Space" and "signs" are key areas of analysis: "subcultures … take shape on the level of the social and cultural class-relations of the subordinate classes ... they, too, win space for the young … [they are] a collective response to the material and situated experience of their class (Clarke, Hall, Jefferson, & Roberts, 1976/ 2006, p.35). The legacy of symbolically "winning space" remains with youth research; 20 years later, a similar trope is evoked by Henry Giroux in discussing a pedagogical mode that challenges youths' claims to "authenticity": "this pedagogical practice also suggests providing students with the opportunity to move beyond the search for an authentic identity. Instead, a pedagogy of representation establishes 'spaces' where meaning can be rewritten, produced, and constructed rather than merely asserted" (1996, p.90). Giroux's invocation of "spaces" here operates on a theoretical rather than practical field; indeed, Giroux's research often produces theoretical rather than empirical studies of youth culture, as did many of the foundational CCCS texts.

Giroux demonstrates an awareness of this abstract use of youth as a category, but argues that this conceptual approach to youth is not only found in subculture studies, as it emerges in a range of disciplines. He notes that "as a concept, youth represents an inescapable intersection of the personal, social, political, and pedagogical. Beneath the abstract codifying of youth around the discourses of law, medicine, psychology, employment, education, and marketing studies, there is the lived experience of youth" (1996, p.3). Giroux notes the absence of investigation into the lived experiences of youth, but does not carry out his investigation himself; rather, he carries out a conceptual analysis which ultimately positions youth as metanarrative, a prism through which we can analyze social science research and constructions of youth. McRobbie (1994) comments that this is not just a problem of academic research, as "youth remains a major point of symbolic investment for society as a whole" (p.156). This symbolic investment in youth as a category becomes problematic when the purposes of research into youth culture are considered. Can academic research be positioned to make interventions that serve youth rather than researchers' own political orientations?

While many have noted that when youth activities have been defined as resistant such research becomes a manifestation of the left-leaning politics of theorists rather than a concrete mapping of youth realities that serves youth, Giroux notes that recently, youth has been mobilized as a scapegoat by the right: "youth has become a central focus in the attack waged by the New Right against subordinated public cultures, especially those occupied by single mothers on welfare, poor inner-city youth, black youth, gays and lesbians, and working-class students" (1996, p.10). This line of thinking forms a central theme in Giroux's work: that "youth" today is

under siege, and that the corporatization of America and its accompanying increasingly conservative political environment results in the evaporation of youth culture. While charting forces of power that shape youth realities is important, it is also important to chart the ways in which youth exercise power themselves; they are not only circumscribed by the structures of power, but also take up their own initiatives. Ultimately, Giroux is an astute commentator of the ways in which "youth" gets mobilized, but does not break out of this mode himself. He comments that:

> As a metaphor for historical memory and a marker that makes visible the ethical and political responsibility of adults to the next generation, youth is an enabling and disabling category. Youth haunts adult society because it references our need to be attentive to a future that others will inherit. It simultaneously serves as a symbol of how a society thinks about itself and as an indicator of changing cultural values, sexuality, the state of the economy, and the spiritual life of a nation (1996, p.10).

Here "youth" takes on many shades of meaning, from sex to economy, but the more practical, perhaps mundane experiences of youth themselves are not mentioned. These loaded treatments of the category of youth are not unique to Giroux; this legacy of subculture studies permeates some of the research on contemporary youth activities. Youth still is championed as a potential site of political emancipation and challenge to the status quo: "The youth movement, in its boldest and most prominent expressions, is defined not primarily by age but by values. It is a movement for fairness: the right of all people to self-representation and self-determination" (James & McGillicuddy, 2001, p.2). Nonetheless, there is also a growing recognition of the need to reconfigure earlier approaches to youth, class, and power in contemporary examinations of youth realities, including the need to focus on more practical youth realities.

Some of these reconceptualizations occur in the field of post-subculture studies, but these reconceptualizations are at times in themselves problematic as they completely abandon the questions of power and class that were so central to subculture studies. Weinzierl and Muggleton (2003) note that post-subcultural studies has erred in its conception of human experience as fluid and fragmented, and largely outside of questions of class; in response, they advocate a move towards

> A position that recognizes the differentiation and multiplicity of points of power in society and the way that various cultural formations and elements articulate within and across these constellations of power in complex and non-linear ways to produce contingent and modificatory outcomes. Such a model dispenses with the theorization of subcultures as either oppositional or incorporated (p.13).

Similarly, Huq (2006) argues that "class, like the existence of gender, has not simply ceased to exist. It is more accurate to recognize that class and gender will forever be mediated by geography/locality, work/education, interactions with families and other relationships, forming complex networks of social processes" (2006, p.41). For Huq, understanding how class interlocks with other structural forces also provides a better lens to capture the activities of multi-ethnic and diasporic youth: youth who did not register as subjects in early CCCS work.

From Subculture to Cultural Production: The Fusing of Work and Leisure

Beyond these reconceptualizations of the categories of youth, class, and power, subculture studies has also been revamped in order to focus on more practical everyday realities of youth rather than on loaded symbolic investments. In his later work, Willis (1990) focuses on the everyday "grounded aesthetics" of creative work that youth do that is ordinary in nature (making collages, making mix

tapes, dancing, decorating bedrooms). Willis moves away from the analysis of the spectacular that is associated with the early CCCS work, and forwards a definition of creativity and creative work that is "not only part of everyday human activity, but also a necessary part -- that which has to be done every day, that which is not extra but essential to ensure the daily production and reproduction of human existence" (p.9). Furthermore, Angela McRobbie's post-CCCS work on ragmarkets (1989) reminds us of the commerce of subculture—of the buying and selling of the items of subcultural style that are privileged by some theorists as symbols of resistance—and suggests the binary between "authenticity" and "incorporation" has always been over-simplified and does not allow for a conceptualization of the practical organizational mechanisms of subculture: in her case, of the buying and selling of clothing.

This binary of opposition/incorporation also regulated "oppositional" subcultural activities to the field of leisure, as the field of work was seen as a field in which "resistance" was futile. Indeed, for Willis (1990), work remains an area that is stifling and cannot be creative, so leisure takes on particular importance. While the work and leisure binary may be overstated in Willis' work, it is important to recognize the predominance of service industry employment for youth (which may be a long-term mode of work rather than a temporary after-school job) in which creativity indeed may not be possible. Conversely, Florida's work argues that distinctions between work and leisure have ceased to exist for the creative class as work becomes leisure, but, as discussed above, this overt celebration of creative employment overlooks the persistent realities of the service industry for many. Nonetheless, it is also important to recognize the potential for the bleeding together

of work and leisure as leisure becomes work in order to be able to map new sources of employment and career pathways for youth.

McRobbie (1999) makes comments about the "aestheticisation of everyday life" which in part recall Willis' (1990) work on "grounded aesthetics," but McRobbie is much more aware of the break-down in distinctions between high art and low art – a break-down that Willis seems to elide. For McRobbie, though, this breakdown is crucial, as it results in a greater number of "average" people attempting to earn a living as artists which also suggests a dismantling of the binary between work/leisure, and this move of "average" people into creative employment is not something that Willis registers. Furthermore, Willis is interested in the ways in which consumption patterns become active or 'productive,' and he relies on a binary between production and consumption to make this argument. For McRobbie, this binary becomes hazier – young people are not doing "symbolic" creative work in their everyday lives; they are attempting to make actual careers with creative work. Willis' work considers "styles and choices of clothes, selective and active use of music; TV, magazines, decoration of bedrooms; the rituals of romance and subcultural styles; the style, banter and drama of friendship groups, music-making and dance," (p.2) but Willis is interested in the relationships of these activities to identity formation, and is not interested in their employment ramifications.

For McRobbie, this surge in new types of career paths and informal economies requires new types of policy making. Similarly, Willis also (obliquely) calls for policy changes, but Willis seems more interested in validating youth activities as meaningful hobbies. He does state, though, that "it is this widest symbolic creativity which should be recognized and promoted in the provision of the general conditions

and spaces that can allow young people's musical practices to flourish – to create the supportive environmental, economic and social conditions which enable them to do better and more creatively what they do already" (1990, p.82). Willis does not state, specifically, how these conditions will be created. But he is correct to suggest that more policy work needs to be done in this area, and more academic work needs to be done to stipulate what supportive "environmental, economic and social conditions" could look like, and how local, provincial, and federal governments could foster them. In order to be able to offer guidance in this area, academic research in youth culture needs to become more empirically grounded. This does not mean the abandonment of theory; rather, policy can be a meeting ground where theory and practice can meet. Academic studies can offer the longitudinal lenses needed to track patterns in youth activities, and provide the theoretical models to analyze the complexities of power and powerlessness in the realities of youth experiences.

Indeed, new theoretical models are needed in order to be able to grasp this bleeding together of work and leisure in subcultural activities. A new conceptualization of subculture is necessary, and this conception must move beyond the divide between oppositional innovation and mainstream incorporation. Sarah Thornton's work on club cultures (2005) moves away from thinking of subculture as a discrete well-formed unit, and proposes the concept of subcultural capital as an alternative concept. In this new articulation of subculture, Thornton is aware of the ways in which subculture affiliations can possibly lead to employment opportunities. Drawing on Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital, Thornton suggests that subcultural capital is based in privileged insider knowledge of underground cool. She argues that subcultures are not about symbolic resistance towards the dominant culture; they are

about demonstrating distinction to the undifferentiated masses, a homogenized crowd which youth distance themselves from through assertions of hipness. Thornton states that subcultural capital may not convert into economic capital, but it may convert into employment such as working as a DJ, club organizer, clothes designer, or journalist. Thornton's research emerges out of club cultures, but if we conceive of subcultures along her definition: as affinity groups that are ad hoc communities with fluid boundaries (yet are also oppositional, but in less of a political sense than earlier definitions of subcultures), we can imagine other types of employment that may emerge out of subcultural capital than those mentioned above. Similarly, in attempting to reevaluate women's involvement in punk, Helen Reddington comments that ad-hoc subcultural organizational activities of the late 1970s paved new employment pathways, as women's "strong entrepreneurial flair involved in setting up a band, writing songs, organizing gigs, publicity, and so on … presaged (and perhaps informed?) the 1980s focus on small businesses initiatives as the way out of economic recession" (2003, p.246). Thornton has more modest claims about subcultural capital converting into employment, and casts the employment opportunities she mentions as not necessarily financially lucrative. She argues that youth may slum it and opt for "classlessness" to transcend class and the "adult" demands and responsibilities of economic capital.

In one of her later conceptualizations of subculture, Angela McRobbie casts subcultural affinity spaces as an "opportunity for learning and sharing skills, for praticising them, for making a small amount of money." Subcultures may impart "future lifeskills in the form of work or self employment" (1994, p.161). As such, McRobbie foregrounds the cultural production of subcultures in a material rather

than a symbolic way, such that cultural production is "the creation of a whole way of life, an alternative to higher education, a job creation scheme for the culture industries" (p.161). To this end, McRobbie's work focuses on everyday activities and she calls for research to pursue "the dignity of the specific" instead of questions of class and ideology (1994, p.159). This attention to the specific has two outcomes: it allows for a reconceptualization of "resistance" at "the more mundane, micrological level of everyday practices and choices about how to live" such that "it becomes possible to see the sustaining, publicizing and extending of the subcultural enterprise as a way of attempting to earn a living within what has been described as the aestheticization of culture (against a backdrop of industrial decline)" (p.162). Next, this focus on everyday practices that emphasizes cultural production offers a wider lens to capture a "more active picture of the involvement of girls and young women, particularly in relation to fashion and styles [and] it also would encourage a more longitudinal dimension which would connect being in a subculture with what happens next, especially in the world of education, training, or employment" (p.167). McRobbie specifically names women and girls here, but this shift in focus should capture activities of non working-class white males—males whose activities did not register well in early CCCS work. This type of investigation requires entering into research with more pragmatic questions, such "what were the social relations which informed the production of the subculture? What preexisting skills were called upon to produce the graphics and the posters and even the music itself?" (p.160).

McRobbie takes up some of these questions in *In the Culture Society* (1999) and here she is concerned with charting the dimensions of youth activities in the field of cultural production and how these activities move into the realm of work. This

interest departs from the previously quoted assertion in *Resistance through Rituals* that "there is no subcultural career for the working-class lad." Conversely, McRobbie is interested in charting "the tension and the uncertainty of earning a living in this subcultural labour market"(x). McRobbie also argues that more emphasis needs to be centered on the changing face of young people's work in cultural production through empirical, ethnographic, and sociological studies that can influence policy making, such that contemporary youth realities and experiences can be better supported.

From Full Participation to Full Employment

Jenkins (2006a) sees cultural production as paving the pathway for "opportunities to participate and to develop the cultural competencies and social skills needed for full involvement [in society]" (p.4). However, full employment is not mentioned. Conversely, Angela McRobbie and others attempt to pave a bridge between informal subcultural activities and paid work. Mulgan and Worpole (1986) made the bold claim that youth cultural production would perform "the historic task of bringing Britain back to some form of full employment. Youth culture, alongside its offshoots in style, fashion, music, and design has been one of the few areas of the economy successfully to make the transitions to the late 80s, creating jobs and finding new international markets" (pp.119-20, quoted in Vokerling, 2001, p.439). Full employment through youth creative work remains to come to fruition, and perhaps a mitigating factor in this lack of full employment stems from barriers in equal access to participation. Discussing Florida's findings of a dearth of US-born African Americans and other non-white citizens employed in the creative class, Oakley

(2006) notes that the situation does not improve in the creative industries (which she defines to not include high-tech jobs, whose inclusion would worsen the portrait):

> Despite the celebrated 'creativity' of the BME[black and minority ethnic] population and the influence of urban black culture on everything from fashion and popular music to everyday speech patterns, the picture in the UK is … bleak. About 4.6 percent of the creative and cultural industry workforce in the UK is from an ethnic minority background (Leadbeater, 2005) compared with 7 percent of the UK labour force as a whole. This is even more disturbing when one considers the concentration of creative industry employment in London, where over a quarter of the labour force is from an ethnic minority background—up to 35 percent in inner London. And the younger age profile of the BME population means that it should make up a relatively higher proportion of the economically active population than a simple per capita comparison with the white population might suggest (p.263).

Clearly, something is not transferring between Jenkins' claims of equal and "full involvement" of youth in participatory cultures and their future employment. In his discussion of education as vocational 'training' for future employment in creative fields, Jenkins (2006a) notes a shift in the purpose of creative writing and art classes: from preparing future writers and artists, to valuing the creative process in itself in terms of its developmental role for young people "even if most will never write, perform, or draw professionally" (p.7). Jenkins' vision of participatory culture and media education sees creativity for all rather than job training for a few, but Oakley's statistics suggest there is a problem in translating this creativity / participation / involvement of all into equal employment opportunities for all. Clearly, this is another site of potential academic intervention, as we need greater academic discussions of the mechanism that youth use to navigate their way through employment in the creative industries in order to understand inequities in access to these mechanisms.

These types of discussions are not currently happening, as there is an absence of attention to youth activities in research in the creative industries, even if youth are those who are newly entering into the field and shaping its direction. Youth cultural production takes place largely at home, in front of computers, guitars, cameras, and sewing machines. While the field of education recognizes that youth bring skills from home into the classroom, it does not recognize that these skills return back home after graduation. These bedroom economies need to be taken seriously if we want to get an accurate picture of youth life pathways and of economic trends, and this warrants more empirical attention to how youth navigate and negotiate multiple streams of work and grants in order to generate income while engaging in personally meaningful activities.

Chapter 3:

Modeling Cultural Policy in Canada: Implications for Youth

Policy Matters

Within the realm of cultural studies, policy studies has long been the neglected and unsexy wallflower to its semiotic, feminist, and Marxist cousins. As we have seen in Chapter 2, this lack of attention to policy has particular shortcomings for studies of youth culture, and Angela McRobbie (1999) argues that more emphasis needs to be centered on the changing face of young people's engagement with cultural production through empirical, ethnographic, and sociological studies that can influence policy making: McRobbie states that many theorists working in the field of cultural studies have disdained more practical and empirical policy recommendation-type of work in favour of "edgier" work in semiotics, textual analysis, and subversive things people do with their cultural commodities. But if cultural studies has the relationship of culture and power under its purview, policy is a material instantiation of this dialectic, and merits serious consideration. Tony Bennett (1992) forwards this argument, and asserts that policy must be included in discussions of culture, stating "the need to include policy considerations in the definition of culture in viewing it as a particular field of government" (p.23).

While the field of cultural studies may not have produced much research that serves to intervene in youth realities, the field of policy studies has not produced much research that forwards critiques of culture. Drawing on Meisel (1979), Gattinger and Saint Pierre (2008) comment that cultural policy is a domain of policy

research in Canada that has not merited a lot of attention. In his 2006 work *Policy Matters*, Clive Robertson suggests that the field of policy studies has typically portrayed policy as a site of national consensus where traditional power structures are unproblematically reproduced. However, Robertson sees alternative ways to read and study policy, as he sees policy as site of potential struggle and contestation of meanings. Robertson suggests a "critical study" of policy that relies on a Foucaultian understanding of power production, stating that "critical studies of policy are recognizable by their re-affirmations of the possible production, and not just the seeking, of power from the 'bottom up,' and for their insistences upon the presence of questions about the stakes of political representation in policy formulations and analysis" (iii). Under this rubric, policy is not only something created at the governmental level, but is also something produced through contestations of traditional meanings. Robertson suggests that the title of his work refers to a dual narrative; policy matters not only to "the imperatives of state-derived cultural policy" but also refers to "policy produced through self-governance, asking what are the ambitions and limits of self-regulation and 'arm's length' status?" (iii). Chapters 5 and 6 will take up the latter part of Robertson's purview of policy, and will turn to an examination of the networks created by young artists and the policy produced though self-governance. This chapter will examine the current landscape of cultural policy in Canada in terms of the imperatives of state-derived cultural policy, but also examine Canadian cultural policy as a site of struggle and contestation over the meaning and values of culture and art, and it will think through the implications of this struggle for youth cultural production.

Robertson does not read policy as merely implemented through a series of administrative maneuvers. Rather, he wants to "trouble the 'practical operations that are merely administered' by emphasizing 'the relationship of policy to politics as a field of contestation between rival discourses, ideologies, interests'" (quoting McGuigan, 1996, p.7). By forwarding this view of policy as an active site of contestation, Robertson puts forth two possible definitions of cultural policy. First, drawing on Miller (1994), Robertson suggests "cultural policy as a site at which the subject is produced" (iii). Second, drawing on McGuigan (1996), Robertson suggests "cultural policy as being principally about the conditions of culture, the material and also the discursive determinations in time and space of cultural production and consumption" (iii). If we are to read Canadian cultural policy with youth as our subject, what mode of youth subjectivity is called into being through its discursive structures? How does policy discursively determine the material conditions of youth cultural production? In what ways does policy produce youth subjects and conditions of youth cultural production in Canada, and in what ways can we read these policy documents as fields of contestation between rival discourses and ideologies as they concern youth interests?

The Infrastructure of Canadian Cultural Policy: A Close Reading of the Status of the Artist Act

Canada has no unified federal policy in the arts, and no dedicated culture ministry mandated to exclusively deal with arts and culture; thus, Canadian cultural policy is not writ large in any one instantiation. Nonetheless, the Canadian Conference of the Arts, Canada's oldest arts advocacy organization, argues that a

"scatter shot" approach to federal cultural policy can be found through bringing together the "infrastructure" of legislation that concerns the arts: the income tax act, the copyright act, the broadcasting act, and the status of the artist act (2006, p.1). A close reading of some of this legislation can provide an image of what mode of subjectivity of the artist is called into being through Canadian cultural policy.

1. Artist as Cultural Civilizer

In Canada, the Status of the Artist Act passed in 1992 and set out to answer some of the calls of the 1980 UNESCO Status of the Artist recommendations concerning the socio-economic status of the artist. This legislation makes some initial comments about the broad role that artists play in society, and opens by stating "the importance of the contribution of artists to the cultural, social, economic and political enrichment of Canada" (Department of Justice Canada, 1992). Here, the reference to cultural "enrichment" suggests the liberal humanist definition of the artist as cultural civilizer, who betters humanity, in this case the Canadian public, through cultural works. Ruben Gaztambide-Fernandez (2008) identifies the liberal humanist conception of the artist as follows: "artists are individuals with special talents whose role is to provide great works of beauty that contribute to the civilizing project of modernity; this is the view of the artist as 'cultural civilizer'" (p.239). Gaztambide-Fernandez traces this conception of the artist back to the Renaissance, when "a new rhetoric of the artist as an individual with special faculties and personality traits emerged" (p.240), but identifies that this conception of the artist crystallized most forcefully in the 19th with the work of Matthew Arnold. In the first chapter of *Culture and Anarchy*, "Sweetness and Light," Arnold (1869/1995) states that studying culture is "the pursuit of perfection" which "then, is the pursuit of

sweetness and light" (p.31). This pursuit involves class-based distinctions of what is deemed to be of cultural worth. Arnold makes remarks about the "Philistinism" of the rising middle-class in the late 19th century, and suggests that the project of culture is to ward off the "vulgarity and "animality" that is associated with "great middle-class liberalism" (p.29). While Canada's Status of the Artist legislation does not make these class-based claims, the idea of multi-faceted enrichment brings this Arnoldian version of moral enrichment to mind nonetheless.

While Gaztambide-Fernandez (2008) traces the lasting influence of liberal humanism in conceptions of the art and the artists, citing that "most contemporary institutions of artistic education are grounded on the views of liberal humanism" (p.253), he also outlines alternative modes of subjectivity for the artist than that of the civilizer, including that of border crosser, and that of the representator. The model of artist as cultural civilizer relies on an "art for art's sake" notion that artists improve humanity because art is a "civilizing" force. The model of artist as border crosser relies on the notion of "art for politics' sake" and the idea that the role of art is to challenge society and work towards progressive change; this model "retains a sense of the artist as an individual with distinct characteristics, but it dismisses the idea that artists are vehicles through which the rules of art are materialized. From this perspective, artists do not respond to extra-social callings to provide great works of art. Instead, their work challenges boundaries, rules, and expectations and disturbs the social order to promote social transformation and 'reconstruction'" (p.244). Finally, the artist as representator relies on an "art for identity's sake" model in which the artist engages in "issues of representation, meaning making, and struggles over public space" (p.248); this model expresses that "artists produce works that inscribe

political struggles over meaning and identification" (p.250). While the latter two of these models may be more relevant to describe contemporary artistic practices, Gaztambide-Fernandez outlines that there is continued emphasis on the model of the artist as civilizer that is found in many art schools; this model is also found in the legislation cited above. This model is insufficient for grappling with the current climate that young artists face:

> I will challenge the normative view that being an artist is simply a matter of inspiration, talent, or intrinsic skill and that the role of the artist is merely to produce 'great' works of art that are valuable for their own sake. This ideological view not only lacks a grounding on social reality, but it is also a thin foundation on which to theorize the curriculum of artistic education and to think through the contemporary challenges facing young artists (p.238).

Gaztambide-Fernandez (2008) suggests a reconceptualization of arts education in order to better grapple with these challenges:

> If we are to rethink the curriculum of artistic education in an attempt to support young artists as they assume their role as the 'locus' of cultural mediation (Wolff, 1993), we must encourage them to confront the range of social roles they may be expected to fulfill. Assuming that developing their 'talents' and 'skills' will suffice is not only naïve, it is to neglect the complexities of cultural production and to foment the role of the arts in social and cultural reproduction and oppression (p.251).

If current Canadian legislation that addresses the role of the artist in society, such as the Status of the Artist Act, does not take up these challenges, how could Canadian cultural policy better reflect the complexities of contemporary cultural production and call into being the range of social roles that young artists may be expected to fulfill beyond providing "enrichment"?

2. The Artist as Nation Builder

Canada's Status of the Artist legislation not only calls a version of the artist as civilizer into being; this definition of the artist is tied to a nationalistic vision of

Canadianess and belonging in the two provisions in the legislation that follow the one cited above, stating "the importance to Canadian society of conferring on artists a status that reflects their primary role in developing and enhancing Canada's artistic and cultural life, and in sustaining Canada's quality of life" and "the role of the artist, in particular to express the diverse nature of the Canadian way of life and the individual and collective aspirations of Canadians" (Department of Justice Canada, 1992). This rhetoric around Canadianess and the links between art and expressing the Canadian way of life recalls claims around national identity and sovereignty that lead to the creation of the Canada Council in 1957, which will be further discussed in Chapter 4. Even if this Status of the Artist legislation does not stem out of a definition of art as "high culture" that underpinned the creation of the Canada Council, the humanistic vision of protecting culture and fostering nationalism remains in the rhetoric of this legislation. Pointing to the work of Bernard Ostry (1978), Anna Upchurch (2007) chronicles the view of the creation of the Canada Council in 1957 as a "'cornerstone' in the development of a distinctly Canadian cultural life" (p.241), as it played a distinct role in uniting the country. The wording of the Status of the Artist legislation cited above suggests the continued rhetorical importance of iterating a link between public support for the arts and Canadian national identity.

3. The Artist as Worker

Beyond this initial rhetoric of Canadianess and enrichment, the legislation primarily concerns itself with the economic status of artists, and sets out to legislate the rights of the artists as workers. After the opening remarks cited above, the rest of the Status of the Artist legislation predominantly sets out to give professional

employment status to Canadian artists, and, as such, fits with Gattinger and Saint Pierre's (2008) characterization of the 1980s-1990s as a period of professionalization of the cultural sector and the growth of the cultural industries. Indeed, "for some artists' associations, 'status of the artist' has become virtually synonymous with providing a statutory regime to enable unions and associations of professional artists to bargain collectively with those who engage artists and to regulate the bargaining process in a manner analogous to labour laws" (Neil, 2007, p.3-4). If we are to read this Status of the Artist Act with youth as our central subject, and ask if the mode of subjectivity called into being is relevant to the experiences of contemporary youth cultural producers, this provision of artist rights to form unions does not speak to independent small-scale and self-produced modes of youth cultural production.

Indeed, the definition of artist as worker here is quite limited and may not be relevant to contemporary artistic practices; while there are initial overtures about role of the artist in Canadian society, the definition of artist that is outlined is not the broader definition of artist as "cultural worker" who plays a role in society as civilizer, border crosser, or representator. Ultimately, the vision of the artist that the legislation sets out is pragmatically oriented; cultural work in the Status of the Artist legislation refers to the rights of artists in the workforce as "independent contractors determined to be professionals" (Department of Justice Canada, 1992). While the initial provisions mentioned above that artists provide "enrichment" might suggest a privileged or elevated position of the artist vis à vis society, the heart of the legislation is that artists are workers like any other. The legislation recognizes the rights of artists to join associations that will lobby on their behalf to form collective agreements that govern the conditions of artists. To this end, the legislation

recognizes several rights of the artist, including "the right of associations representing artists to be recognized in law and to promote the professional and socio-economic interests of their members" (Department of Justice Canada, 1992). If this legislation sets out to normalize artistic labour though the assumption that artists are workers like any other, it does not fully take into account that work in the culture industries is often unlike any other—unregulated by unions and organizations, ad-hoc, and independent—even if artists are granted rights in these areas. To this end, the legislation might better serve artists if it addressed the conditions of artistic labour that make it a field that is different than others. The current legislation both initially positions artists in an elevated position, as they perform enrichment and enact nation building, but also normalizes the conditions of artistic work by assuming it is characterized by the same conditions as other professions. To be more relevant to contemporary conditions of artistic labour, we need the opposite: a definition of artistic practice that does not see artists as responding to "extra-social callings to provide great works of art," but sees artistic practice as engrained in and responding to society, and is characterized by labour conditions that are distinct from other professions.

Here, it is important to bear in mind the differences between policy and practice. To what extent do the policy provisions of the Status of the Artist Act affect the material conditions of artists as workers? Recalling Robertson's claims about policy above, in what ways are youth discursively produced as subjects by policy and in what ways does policy reveal the material and the discursive determinations of youth cultural production? Discussing youth cultural producers, Leadbeater and Oakley (1999) characterize the conditions of work of young people

involved in the cultural industries much differently than the Status of the Artist Act, as young people are characterized as "the Independents," because they often actively choose to pursue work away from major organizations:

> A large and growing share of employment in these industries is accounted for by the self-employed, freelancers and micro- businesses. These new Independents are often producers, designers, retailers and promoters all at the same time. They do not fit into neat categories. The Independents thrive on informal networks through which they organise work, often employing friends and former classmates. Although some are ambitious entrepreneurs, many want their businesses to stay small because they want to retain their independence and their focus on their creativity. Yet that does not mean they see themselves as artists who deserve public subsidy. They want to make their own way in the market (p.11).

While Leadbeater and Oakley are speaking to the British context, Canadian reports have found similar findings. In the *Next Generation of Artistic Leaders and Arts Audiences* report, "many participants spoke of entrepreneurial models when discussing their long-range career plans. The goal for many participants is to be entirely reliant on economic income generated through their practices, and reliance on support from arts funders is often seen as a 'first step' towards this goal" (DECODE, 2007, p.55). That this entrepreneurial model of the arts is often fulfilled through self-employment and freelance work that is not affiliated with larger unions or organizations is not something that the Status of the Artist legislation addresses. In the *Next Generation* study, some participants voiced a disconnect from unions and professional organizations, stating that they "feel that the membership and designation within these types of organizations serves to limit them, not only in terms of how they self-identify, but also what contexts they are allowed to work in" (p.13). McRobbie (2004) notes a "blend of bohemian individualism of artists and the business ethos of the commercial art director" (p.133) such that "union organization along traditional lines

is either seen as irrelevant or simply by-passed" (p.133). This model of cultural employment that exists away from unions and professional organizations carries with it a host of implications, from employment insurance, to extended health care, to pensions, that simply granting "professional" status to artist does not begin to address. The *Next Generation of Artistic Leaders* report does not take up a discussion of these types of implications, but does discuss the disjuncture between current models of artistic employment for young people and current funding streams:

> Flexibility in eligible project costs, allowances for capital investments, grants for business training, and workshops on the "business of art" were only some of the key needs identified by participants. Recognizing this entrepreneurial desire will be an important challenge for arts funders, many of whom currently focus their efforts and resources towards supporting artistic creation and organizational infrastructure (p.55).

These comments suggest more stability for young artists could be created through mechanisms that allow for more flexibility rather than by granting more professional rights. All in all, in the "perception of most artists and arts administrators, a perception which appears to be confirmed by the available data, the [Status of the Artist] Act has not improved the economic status of professional Canadian artists" (Neil, 2007, p.7). There is a need for additional government policies and programs to address the economic situation of artists, which could possibly include:

> Deducting artistic expenses against income; preserving the freelance status of artists for purposes of income tax and copyright; responding to fluctuating income levels; providing tax exemption for all artistic income or for royalties; providing tax exempt status for artistic grants; access to employment insurance, if only for the social benefits; ensuring appropriate pensions for artists; bankruptcy protection; health and safety; appropriate and affordable living and work spaces; providing appropriate professional development and training opportunities (Neil, 2007, p.13).

Furthermore, with the absence of unionized work in the creative industries, McRobbie (2004) notes "inequities, injustices, malpractices are widely recognized, almost normative, but rarely confronted" (p.133-134). Addressing these issues, and the recommendations above, would be mechanisms to allow for greater equity and stability in a field that is characterized by instability, and any of these practical recommendations might do more to improve the social and economic status artists than the Status of the Artist act.

Towards Youth-Specific Cultural Policy

In order to recognize the entrepreneurial model of youth artistic practice cited above, there also needs to be a recognition that the conditions facing young cultural producers are distinctively different than artists on the whole. In a discussion of the situation for young artists in Britain, Leadbeater and Oakley (1999) report that

> According to the [British] government's Cultural Trends survey, about 34 percent of people working in the cultural sector are self-employed, compared with an average of 15 percent for the economy as a whole …The workforce in these industries is disproportionately young: a third of people working in the cultural sector are aged between twenty and 34, compared with 26 per cent for the economy as a whole. The rate of self-employment is much higher in younger, newer sectors of the cultural industries and is lower in the subsidized and public cultural sectors, such as museums and galleries, which tend to have an older workforce. For example, about 30 per cent of the workforce in performing and visual arts, museums and libraries is over 50 years old, whereas a fifth of the workforce in the film industry is under 25 (pp.20-21).

Canada has no comparable statistics to Britain's detailed breakdown of cultural employment in the Cultural Trends survey (compiled from 1991 census data), but, as discussed in Chapter 1, the 2008 Canadian census similarly reveals a low median age of those employed in the culture industries, and also reveals a rise in self-

employment in the arts. Thus, we can conclude that young people working in cultural fields have different needs than the population of workers as a whole. Canada's Status of the Artist legislation makes no acknowledgement of youth, or the distinct needs that youth might face as artists. Addressing the "gestation" period of young artists, Leadbeater and Oakley state that

> Independents often spend a lot of time (perhaps several years) early in their careers sorting out what they want to do, what their distinctive skill is and how they might make money from it. This period of exploration can be chaotic and unfocused but it is vital because often it is only the sense of vocation formed at this early stage that carries them through the uncertainties they will face later on. In this period cultural entrepreneurs often do not need business skills or large investments. They need quite small sums to keep going. At this stage they need access to micro-credit (pp.26-27).

These concerns about career development are also evident from the participants in the *Next Generation of Artistic Leaders and Arts Audiences* report, as participants "vocalized anxiety about the early years of their careers, particularly as they leave school and attempt to build their resumes, but also as they seek financial, professional and mentorship support through arts funders or arts audiences" (pp.3-4). Clearly, the rights to access collective bargaining that the Canadian Status of the Artist legislation sets out does not address the youth needs that these studies have found; in fact, this legislation seems to address older artists, even if young artists may fit the definition of "professional" that the legislation sets out.

Leadbeater and Oakley (1999) state that youth careers in the culture industries set out a specific set of challenges for the governments in terms of policy: "This preponderance of self-employment, sole traders and micro-businesses in the cultural industries has important implications for policymaking. Government sponsored business support programmes and arts funding is tailored toward fewer

larger organisations. Developing an ecology of hundreds of micro-businesses requires a set of policy tools that most economic development agencies lack" (p.29). Canada is no better equipped than Britain to take on this task, and Canada's policy in the arts does not presently take up this challenge, nor does it seem to be moving in this direction. In order for Canada to better foster its young cultural producers, it must first recognize that these youth have distinct situations and needs. Youth needs to be addressed as a distinct category within cultural policies, but youth are often not addressed at all.

Addressing Youth: Canadian Cultural Policy and Education

The CCA's assertions that the framework for Canada's federal cultural policy must be pieced together from various pieces of governmental infrastructure is especially true when trying to piece together a policy framework that is directed towards youth and cultural production, and employment. At the federal level, youth-centered policies can be found through the Department of Justice Canada's *Youth Justice Renewal Strategy* and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC)'s *Youth Employment Strategy* (YES). The Department of Justice Canada does fund community-based youth arts programs (such as The Remix Project in Toronto, which will be discussed in Chapter 6), but this youth justice strategy relies on a deficit model that focuses on the prevention of youth criminal activity (Jeffrey, 2008), which has no direct connection with youth cultural production. Chapter 6 will more fully discuss shortcomings in the youth engagement model that targets at-risk youth with youth arts programs, and give a more thorough overview of the policy jurisdictions

that support this model. According to Zemans and Coles (forthcoming), youth arts programs have

> Most often been supported under the Community Arts policy framework. Community Arts exists at all levels of the cultural policy community across Canada, although support for young artists and community youth groups varies between different community arts policy priorities and it is municipal and provincial governments that are most often formally engaged in Community Arts policy development (p.11).

This lack of coherence at the federal level ultimately means a lack of stability in these programs; a comprehensive national youth policy framework is needed to provide greater stability for these programs.

While a variety of federal jurisdictions may have provisions for youth, there is a lack of federal policy that targets youth creative employment. Evidently, HRSDC's YES programs are employment focused: it offers programs such as "career focus" and "summer work experience," which provide work opportunities for youth, and "skills link," which targets youth who experience barriers entering into the workforce, and "youth awareness," which targets unemployed youth to make them more aware of skilled trade sectors. None of these programs contain any overt connections to the creative industries in their descriptions, or to self-generated employment in any field for that matter; rather, these programs offer funding to employers and community organizations to hire young people. Also at the federal level, the Cultural Human Resources Council (CHRC) does directly address careers in the arts, and offers a youth internship program. According to the CHRC website, "you cannot apply to CHRC for an internship. Instead, you must find an organization willing to apply, and hire you as an intern" (Cultural Human Resources Council, 2009). As we have seen above, youth engagement with the creative industries is often self-employed and away from major organizations; youth energies

might be better supported by assisting these self-directed pathways than by causing them to create their own internship with an organization. Finally, "children and youth" are addressed by the Department of Canadian Heritage, but the majority of the programs offered by Heritage for youth, such as the "Canada Day Poster Challenge," are not employment centered, nor do they relate to involvement in the creative industries. The Department of Canadian Heritage does offer an internship program, Young Canada Works, which provides internships for youth in cultural organizations, but as we have seen in Chapter 1, internships alone do not necessarily lead to sustainable pathways for youth in the creative industries. Indeed, what is lacking is a comprehensive youth policy framework that supports youth self-generated small-scale activities in the creative industries.

Gollmitzer and Murray (2008) also state that no comprehensive policy framework exists for the creative economy in Canada. Indeed, existing policy instruments can be found in four key areas: "education and training," "awards and contests," "business support," and "tax and social security policies" (Gollmitzer & Murray, 2008, p.2). Amongst these areas, "education and training" would suggest the need for a tight focus on contemporary youth needs and practices, but even in this area, the needs that are specific to youth are often not referenced. For example, in 1999, after public consultation, the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage produced a document called *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Being* that outlined the role for the federal government to play in supporting culture in Canada. This report is organized around different phases of cultural production and consumption, and addresses creators, training, production and distribution, preservation, and consumers and citizens. The only place where youth are specifically addressed in this

report in their own subheading is in the "consumers and citizens" section; there is nothing that speaks to youth in the "creators" section. Grouping children and youth together defines youth in an infantile and dependent way; this grouping does not take into account the growing independence and autonomy of youth that is claimed as they seek out their own pathways of cultural production. Youth need to be treated separately from children, as they are their own distinct social group, and this would be best served by having their own subheading in the "creators" section of the document, as they have their own unique needs as cultural producers. By placing youth in the "consumers and citizens" section, youth are addressed as arts audiences, but not as cultural producers. The recommendations to the government for youth and children in this section include "access to cultural materials and activities for children" through federal government programs and services, that the "Canada Council for the Arts review its policies and programs to ensure that they recognize, support and encourage cultural activity in the lives of children" (Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, 1999). This section does not address youth as cultural producers; rather, it promotes exposure to the arts and culture, including Canadian "children's books, magazines, television and new media materials" so that these children will become arts enthusiasts who support the arts. The idea that ensuring youth access to the arts is a method of creating the next generation of arts audiences is a position that the Canadian Conference of the Arts has taken up, as the *A Sense of Place* report cites a CCA report stating "the importance of cultivating the next generation of arts supporters, audiences and patrons is integral to the long term survival and prosperity of the arts and cultural industries" (1998, p.28). The mode of subjectivity that is called into being here for youth is one of cultural consumption,

not production. There is one reference in the "children and youth" heading of the "consumers and citizens" section that suggests that artist visits to schools can "inspire the artists of tomorrow," but there is no reference to youth involvement in the creative industries that is happening today.

Youth would also seem to be implicated in the "training" section of this document, but in this section, the word "youth" is never mentioned. Youth are more than "individuals" or "students," and support that is specific to youth requires discussion and specific mention of youth as distinct social category. Some youth are not "students," yet are still pursuing pathways in the creative industries. The document's recommendations around training that are most suggestive of youth are those recommendations that push national training schools (National Theatre School, the National Ballet School, the Canadian Film Centre, etc.). However, recommendations around training do not necessarily have any specific implications for youth, as one recommendation is that "the Departments of Canadian Heritage and Human Resources Development Canada develop new media programs and training packages that can be used by community-based cultural organizations" (Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, 1999). Those recommendations that do discuss "students" set out a liberal humanist vision of arts education:

> National training schools offer conservatory-type training that focuses on the needs of individuals intent on pursuing a career in the arts. These schools serve students who have determination and talent. The Committee supports the principle that Canadian students should be able to choose between a professional training program and a general arts program at a university or college. Accordingly, the Committee endorses the continued federal support of Canada's national schools, and recognizes the need to support new national training schools as the needs are identified (Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, 1999).

Gaztambide-Fernandez (2008) identifies that "few arts organizations make explicit statements about the social role of the work they do. By and large, these institutions are explicitly dedicated to identifying and developing the skills of young artists with what are assumed to be inherent or inborn inclinations and abilities" (pp.252-253), and this certainly seems to be the vision of the national training schools that the *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Being* document outlines, with its statement that "training and talent are lifelong companions, and the greater the talent the more inspired and exacting the training needs to be." Gaztambide-Fernandez (2008) outlines other possible visions for arts education, stating that "curriculum of artistic education must challenge young artists to confront the contradictions of a postmodern, postindustrial, and electronically mediated society by affirming the role of the artist in the public sphere of a democratic sphere" (p.235). Gaztambide-Fernandez (2008) outlines the mechanisms that arts education could use to fulfill these goals:

> Artistic education must shift its role from imparting information and knowledge, to becoming a space where information is exchanged and knowledge constructed on the basis of public interaction and not private study, as most artistic learning is designed. For curriculum to become relevant to the processes of common culture, the curriculum of artistic education must be envisioned as an open public space where students connect with each other, share ideas about their work, exchange materials, and develop new techniques. Institutions of artistic education should provide resources and offer instruction on those technical skills that become relevant to students in the process of creative consumption/production. Young artists would take a lead in establishing their own creative networks and identifying those practices that are most relevant or salient to the specificities of their cultural practice. In this sense, institutions of artistic education would be peripheral to cultural activity, while at the same time becoming hubs where critique and technological support are readily available (p.255).

This vision is dramatically different than the vision of conservatory schools that *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Being* sets out, as Gaztambide-Fernandez's vision relies on the notion that youth need to be active in producing the mechanisms to facilitate their

own cultural production rather than be trained in a preset technique. While the training section of *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Being* may promote the conservatory school model, this is only one type of pathway in the creative industries, and a type that may be becoming outdated, and other possible models need to be explored in cultural policy. Leadbeater and Oakley's (1999) research on youth engagement in the creative industries characterizes the nature of this engagement much differently than the conservatory school model does. While this model draws connections between extensive training in the skills and techniques that relate to professionalization in an art form, Leadbeater and Oakley (1999) cite a disconnect between formal training and youth engagement in the cultural industries:

> Higher education does not matter because degree courses provide people with formal training or skills in artistic production: only a tenth of people working in the cultural sector have formal creative arts qualifications. Higher education is important to the new Independents because a period at university allows them to experiment; university towns deliver large audiences for experimental, cheaply produced culture and cultural entrepreneurs often meet their future partners and collaborators at college. Universities are incubators for cultural entrepreneurs (p.21).

These remarks coincide with Gaztambide-Fernandez (2008)'s suggestion above that youth need to be supported in the creation of their own artist networks, and that art education institutions may be peripheral to cultural activity. Leadbeater and Oakley recommend that post-secondary education be more widely supported by federal governments, but not because it in itself leads to careers: "our research underlined how vital access to higher education is for future cultural entrepreneurs. Universities are incubators for cultural entrepreneurs. Expanding the reach of university education from the current 35 per cent of the eighteen year olds to more than 50 per cent will be vital to expand opportunity. This is more important than investing more in specialist institutions of artistic training" (p.42). Clearly, Leadbeater and Oakley's

research sets out a different model for supporting youth endeavours than does the model of artistic training in *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Being*. While Leadbeater and Oakley are working from a British model, there is no comparable research in Canada to draw on in terms of mapping youth activities in the creative industries to make recommendations for better support for youth from the federal government. In order for Canada to be able to address the needs of its youth, more research into the nature of Canadian youth engagement with the creative industries needs to be done such that researchers can make policy-oriented recommendations that accurately reflect the types of support that Canadian youth need to thrive in the cultural industries.

Canadian Cultural Policy: Campaign Trail and Recession

If we follow Robertson's (2006) suggestion, cited above, that cultural policy is a site where the subject is produced, the youth subject in Canadian cultural policy is ghostly at best. But Canadian cultural policy is not only found in the infrastructure of existing legislation; it is also continuously produced through the "contestation between rival discourses, ideologies, interests," (Robertson, 2006, p.6). Arts and culture became a site of contestation between rival discourses and became an issue of public interest in the October 2008 Canadian federal election as the government's funding cuts to certain arts programs (announced in the summer of 2008) became contentious issues. Beyond this, the economic crisis that began to be illuminated in November 2008 had implications for the creative industries; the government's response to these issues is also suggestive of the ways in which cultural policy is

continuously produced. At a time when youth are increasingly turning to the creative industries as sources of employment, the visibility of these practices at the governmental level in Canadian context has been lacking, even if issues around government support of the creative industries gained more attention at the end of 2008 and into 2009. This lack became apparent with the government's two Speeches from the Throne, which will be discussed below.

This lack of visibility of youth engagement with the creative industries signals the neglect of youth issues at the governmental level but also a general image problem of the arts and creative industries as a whole. In times of economic uncertainty, youth may be in particularly vulnerable positions, and career pathways in creative fields may need greater support. With the looming economic collapse in November 2008, the financial sector and the auto industry were not the only industries greatly affected. The Canadian Conference of the Arts chronicled that the stock market collapse heavily affected arts organizations, as many of these organizations are run on endowment funds. For example, the National Ballet of Canada projected a $ 900,000 shortfall in budgeted revenues due to the downfall in the stock market (Canadian Conference of the Arts, 2008, November 25). The economic difficulties faced by the creative industries have direct implications for cultural workers. Also in the ballet world, Ballet BC (British Columbia's professional ballet company) laid off all of its dancers and much of its office staff at in the end of November 2008 due to difficult economic times (CBC News, 2008). Economic difficulties continue to face the ballet world, as the New York City Ballet laid off several dancers in July 2009: "They were among 11 members of the company's corps de ballet, some barely in their 20s, who have joined the swelling ranks of laid-off workers nationwide struggling to find new

ways in the recession. They were told in February, shortly before the deadline for new contracts to be issued, that their employment would not be renewed, mainly for economic reasons" (Walkin, 2009). Walkin suggests that the difficulty of experiencing a lay off is particularly strong for creative industries workers: "The emotions are especially acute because, more than many other workers, ballet dancers define themselves and their self-worth by their profession. Losing a job is like losing one's identity" (Walkin, 2009).

Amidst this economic uncertainty, Canada's newly re-elected minority Conservative government set priorities for governing in the Speech from the Throne on November 19, 2008. This speech, entitled "Protecting Canada's Future," did not foreground youth or the creative industries. The role of the creative industries in the economy did merit a brief mention in "Expanding Investment and Trade" section: "Cultural creativity and innovation are vital not only to a lively Canadian cultural life, but also to Canada's economic future. Our Government will proceed with legislation to modernize Canada's copyright laws and ensure stronger protection for intellectual property" (Government of Canada, 2008). The mention of copyright laws points to backing for the infrastructure that supports cultural work, and does make the connection between the creative industries and the economy, but this one brief mention of the creative industries does not make reference to the realities of those people—which, increasingly, are young people— who work in the creative industries. Elsewhere, in the "Securing Jobs for Families and Communities" section, this speech does mention workers, and it is in the context of a discussion of family where we find the only reference to youth in this speech, in a comment that the government "will strengthen Canada's workforce for the future by continuing to

support student financial assistance and taking measures to encourage skilled trades and apprenticeships" (Government of Canada, 2008). This positioning of youth as students does not adequately cover the range of youth experiences, and certainly does not grapple with the experience of youth as workers (rather, the assumption is that youth will later enter the work force, but are not currently working). Gollmitzer and Murray (2008) note that "sharp differences in status, training, credentials and the degree of professional independence obtained by various categories of creative workers exist. Most at risk are youth, aboriginal and visible minorities and those in rural areas" (p.3). The Speech from the Throne does make reference to the needs of aboriginal people, citing the need to ensure that aboriginal people "fully share in economic opportunities," and mentions education as a tool to assist in this project. However, the notion that youth, aboriginals, and visible minorities may be in a more economically vulnerable position than the population as a whole in times of economic crisis, especially with regards to employment in the creative industries, is not addressed.

Rather than support youth practices or new trends in economic growth, the Speech from the Throne underlines the government's support for the traditional basis of Canadian industry—manufacturing and resource extraction. The Speech from the Throne mentions specific industries that will be supported by the government, including farming, the manufacturing sector (automotive and aerospace industries), and "traditional industries," such as fisheries, mining, and forestry. The government's commitment to these industries also extends to "marketing Canadian products abroad and helping businesses to innovate" (Government of Canada, 2008). In terms of economic growth, the government underlines tax cuts as a job

creation scheme: "our Government has already cut taxes to lower costs for business and help them compete and create jobs. To further reduce the cost pressures on Canadian business, our Government will take measures to encourage companies to invest in new machinery and equipment" (Government of Canada, 2008). With the reference to machinery, the government again underlined its support for the manufacturing sector.

The support for marketing Canadian resource-based products abroad came on the heels of cuts to federal programs designed to market Canadian cultural products abroad. In August 2008, Harper announced the cancellation of the PromArt and Trade Routes programs, both funded by the federal government. This move seems to suggest a departure from previous trends in Canadian cultural policy. In 2007, Sutherland and Straw stated that

> The Canadian government's cultural policy is becoming increasingly trade-oriented. This does not mean that trade was not previously an issue in the cultural field. However, whereas cultural policy was, in the past, designed principally to ameliorate the effects of international trade on Canadian culture, policies are more and more oriented towards allowing Canadian producers to take advantage of international trade in cultural products (p.153).

However, Maxwell (2007) suggests that since 2006, the Harper government has relinquished public diplomacy and the emphasis on cultural aspects of foreign policy. The 1995 document *Canada and the World*, produced by the Chrétien government, configured Canadian culture as the third "pillar" of Canadian foreign policy, after economic growth and international peace and security. But this demarcation of the role of culture in Canadian foreign policy was absent in the Martin government's 2005 document *A Role of Pride and Influence in the World*, as "cultural relations make few appearances throughout the entirety of the document" (Maxwell, 2007, p.33).

Maxwell identifies that since the election of the Harper government, this turn away from the role of culture in foreign policy has continued. The cuts to PromArt and Trade Routes suggest a relinquishment of the importance placed on the international trade of cultural products, and this relinquishment suggests a lack of understanding of the economic impact of the arts, as well as an underestimation of the importance of Canada's creative industries for her image abroad. Even while manufacturing and resource extraction are faltering as Canada's economic base, these industries continue to be seen as credible and viable for government support. While preparing a culture and foreign policy report, John Ralston Saul found that Canadian foreign policy, domestic events, and sports were not visible abroad, and that "Canada's profile abroad is, for the most part, its culture. That is our image. That is what Canada becomes in people's imaginations around the world" (quoted in Henighan, 1996, p.15). An important addition to Saul's finding is that it is often youth cultural producers who are seen as innovative and edgy the eyes of the world. From the annual "Le Guess Who Festival" in Utrecht, Holland, which exclusively features Canadian bands, to the heavy Canadian presence in international music showcases, like Iceland's Airwaves music festival, to being name checked by Indiana-based indie record label Secretly Canadian, and Athens, Georgia-based indie band Of Montréal, "Canada" has come to stand for being avant-garde and edgy by and large through the efforts of Canadian youth. In advertising, we've seen Feist in trendy iPod ads, and when an Austrian public utility company used one of Owen Pallett's Final Fantasy songs (from his award-winning album *He Poos Clouds*) without permission, he forced the company to fund a hip music festival instead of suing them. Young actors like Ellen Page and Michael Cera are garnering international praise as Hollywood's hip

new generation, but still choose to call their native Canada home. While Celine Dion and Shania Twain may represent a presence as heavy-hitters in the international music scene, younger artists, like Wolf Parade, Arcade Fire, and Holy Fuck represent innovation and hipness to the world.

But this international image of Canadian cultural producers seems to be unseen by Canada itself. On the campaign trail in September 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper cast Canadian artists as over-indulged, stating: "I think when ordinary working people come home, turn on the TV and see a gala of a bunch of people at, you know, a rich gala all subsidized by taxpayers claiming their subsidies aren't high enough, when they know those subsidies have actually gone up – I'm not sure that's something that resonates with ordinary people" (Benzie, Campion-Smith & Whittington, 2008). While opponents and political rivals were quick to point out the fallacy of casting artists as "rich" due to the low average incomes of artists, another fallacy that was not noted but is potentially just as incendiary is the bifurcation of "ordinary working people" and "artists," as if artists are not workers. Furthermore, Harper's comments obscure the realities of young people entering into the cultural industries. Putting aside the notion that successful artists are wealthy, Harper's remarks ignore the labour required to achieve this level of success, and this labour is something that needs to be chartered if we are to get a sense of youth activities and needs. In an editorial response to Harper's comments, Margaret Atwood (2008) wrote: "well, I can count the number of moderately rich writers who live in Canada on the fingers of one hand: I'm one of them, and I'm no Warren Buffett. I don't whine about my grants because I don't get any grants. I whine about other grants—grants for young people, that may help them to turn into me, and thus

pay to the federal and provincial governments the kinds of taxes I pay, and cover off the salaries of such as Mr. Harper. In fact, less than 10 per cent of writers actually make a living by their writing, however modest that living may be. They have other jobs."

While arts advocates across the country turned to the economic significance of the creative industries in order to make the case for the need for governmental support of the arts, Atwood's comments above point to a somewhat more complex picture than the simple economic impact of the arts. If less than 10% of writers earn an income from writing, and need other jobs to support themselves, perhaps we need a better picture of how young people navigate and negotiate multiple paths in order to earn an income. If Atwood desires to help young people "to turn into [her]," grants alone will not provide the necessary infrastructural support. So what else can the federal government do other than hand out money to individual artists? In late November 2008, Canada's minister of Minister of Finance, James Flaherty, asked for suggestions for paths to take towards revitalizing the Canadian economy in a time of looming global recession. The CCA responded to this call with suggestions about creating economic stimulus through the creative industries, noting that "creating jobs in the arts and culture sector costs a fraction of what it costs to create jobs in the industrial sector," and suggesting that "rapid returns" could be had through investing in the creative economy (2008, November 25). In the memo delivered to Flaherty, the first recommendation is *"*the government invest at least $ 1.5 million a year for the next five years in the creation of a mentorship/internship program for the cultural sector. The government has various options, including the Cultural Human Resources Council and a number of National Arts Service

Organizations, to ensure this investment in job creation and in the future development of the sector is administered in the most efficient and immediate ways" (2008, December 18). Again, youth is not specifically stated here, but mentorship/internship programs have the clearest implications for youth and youth employment. At the very least, this recommendation imagines modes of being other than the rather limited "youth as students" vision that was laid out the November 2008 Speech from the Throne. The CCA's recommendations to Flaherty have implications for certain demographics (i.e. youth), but the recommendations also offer suggestions towards targeting communities as a whole: "As part of the Employment Strategy, the CCA recommends that the Department of Canadian Heritage be provided with an additional $100 million to invest in the Cultural Spaces program to allow more communities and organizations to proceed with their capital development plans. This investment should be an annual increase for the next four years" (2008, December 18). While this recommendation does not specifically target youth, targeting sustainable community development is one mechanism to support youth activities.

When Budget 2009 was unveiled, there was an emphasis on maintaining arts and culture spending that was not found in the Speech from the Throne in November 2008, nor in the Conservative's campaigning leading up to the October 14, 2008 election. With regards to the arts, Budget 2009 states:

> Culture reflects who we are as a nation, how we see ourselves within our country, and how we appear to the world. Day-to-day, Canadians experience the essence of this rich and diverse country though the imagery and words of its artists, through works which demonstrate the best of talent. While resilient in many ways, the cultural sector is plainly also vulnerable to economic shocks. The Government wants to help ensure as much stability as possible for the sector at a time when the sector is facing difficult challenges. Budget 2009 provides over $335

> million in support for culture and arts – recognizing the importance of our artistic institutions and the role they play in Canadians' lives (Department of Finance, 2009, p.174).

The bulk of this funding represents a continuation of funds that had already been committed to cultural programs, leaving the CCA (2009, January 27) to comment that Budget 2009 is "more status quo than economic stimulus" in terms of culture. But one area of new funding is the Canada Prizes for the Arts and Creativity, which is intended to

> Bring the world's best new artists from a vast array of art forms to Canada to compete for the title of most promising new artist and for significant cash awards. These artists will be publicly adjudicated by a distinguished panel of established artists in each discipline … Budget 2009 will provide $25 million for an endowment to support the creation of international awards to recognize excellence in dance, music, art and dramatic arts" (Department of Finance, 2009, p.175).

In the its response to Budget 2009, the CCA notes that it is "difficult to object to any money being dedicated to arts and culture," but raise objections to funding being targeted towards mostly foreign artists, and signal that the "main disappointment" with Budget 2009 is "the refusal of the government to consider investing more in touring" of Canadian artists abroad, noting that "Trade Routes and PromArt were programs which specialized in this area and were cut under the 39th Parliament," and the government has remained firm in its decision that these programs will end on March 31, 2009 (CCA, 2009, February 9). These rather bewildering changes in funding directions seem to represent an undecided future for Canada's cultural policy, as well as a continued lack of specific attention to the needs of contemporary youth cultural producers.

The Road Forward: Towards a Creative Ecology

While the government did not adhere to the CCA's suggestion to invest $100 in Cultural Spaces, Budget 2009 does allocate $ 30 million of new funding in cultural infrastructure for one year. However, the CCA notes that "these funds are largely designated for projects in Toronto and Montréal and that none will be available for much needed cultural infrastructure projects in other communities across the country" (2009, February 9). Beyond increasing funding levels, if we are to support culture through supporting community projects, we need a broad-based approach to integrating many different government sectors together in policy-making that currently doesn't exist. Currently, the Department of Canadian Heritage administers, amongst others, the areas of culture and youth participation, but the connection between these areas and employment is not made within Heritage, as it does not deal with employment issues other than in a few small programs. The need for a broad-based approach to policy that works across policy jurisdictions is hinted at with Leadbeater and Oakley's word choice in the above cited passages in which they reference the complex infrastructure that is needed to support the "development of an ecology of hundreds of micro-businesses" (1999, p.29). Indeed, the term ecology makes reference to the relationships between different organisms, and in this case, would rely on integrating policies that relate to business and employment, trade, education, and culture. This integration is currently not seen in the Canadian context, but a more developed policy infrastructure that works across these areas would better serve youth cultural production. In their discussion of pertinent directions for Canadian cultural policy, Gollmitzer and Murray identify that "the goal is a theoretically and practically elegant integration of culture and the economy in policy

practice" (2008, p.18). According to David Throsby (2001), this elegant integration suggests that cultural policy should not only emphasize the economic earning power of the arts, which is often one of the arguments for supporting the arts that gets made by arts organizations. Rather than focusing on the economic values of the arts alone, we should shift to a broader policy focus "where creative activity has the greatest scope to generate economic and social rewards." This shift towards emphasizing social rewards as well as economic benefits would mean a turn "to employment policy, to regional and urban development policy, to industry policy and other fields like labour and the social economy" (quoted in Gollmitzer & Murray, p.18). While Gollmitzer and Murray do not discuss youth, their framework of a "creative ecology" is one that could recognize the significance and impact of youth activities as participants in the creative ecology; this policy framework could also integrate youth arts policy into the above-mentioned policy areas, even if young artists may not individually be earning significant incomes from their cultural practices. Economic models may not be able to register the significance of youth cultural production, so we need to move beyond economic models, and into something like a creative ecology framework provides. The attempt to make sense of the economic impact of the arts looks at the relationship between the creative industries and the whole economy, but there is a need to look more broadly at the relationship between the creative industries and communities—surely this has an economic consideration, but this cannot be the whole consideration. Other than charting economic output and economic growth, we also need to register youth activities so that the education system matches the reality of their experiences and so that communities are able to support these activities such that they can be healthy

and functional communities. While economic models often make no reference to people and their individual activities, there is a need for cultural policy frameworks to register non-economic community based activities such as youth arts and youth arts organizations, which will be discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. Throsby (2008) notes the possibility of discussing "core activities" of the cultural industries in terms other than economic ones:

> If the cultural industries are interpreted primarily in economic terms, the policy spotlight will clearly fall on those sectors producing the greatest growth rates in employment, value of output, exports, etc. If cultural policy is directed more strongly towards achieving a government's artistic or cultural objectives, a different configuration of the cultural industries will be preferred, and a different group of core activities will be identified (p.222).

In a creative ecology model that has sustainable community development as its objective, "core activities" would include small-scale youth cultural production, amongst other community activities. These activities are not significant if we look at the creative industries purely in economic terms, and this may explain the current lack of presence of youth in Canadian cultural policies.

In this move to a new framework for thinking about policy in an integrated and community-focused way, we need to think about the creation of relevant policy infrastructure that emerges from citizens themselves rather than that which is solely administered by governments. Indeed, we need to bear in mind Robertson's (2006) argument discussed above that policy is not only something administered from the government to the people, but is also created by people themselves. Chapter 5 will discuss how youth networks aim to create some of the infrastructure that is needed to support youth cultural production, but theoretical models are also useful to think

through some of the changes that need to take place. Discussing the need for this refocus to a bottom-up mode of policy making, Donald, Morrow and Athanasiu (2003) suggest a move from cultural policy to cultural planning. Baeker (2002) comments that "cultural planning" means moving away from discipline-based approaches to culture (e.g. visual arts, performing arts, heritage) to place-based approaches:

> Discipline-based distinctions grew up in part as a result of granting programs established by senior levels of government. These programs tended to place more emphasis on developing specific artistic disciplines than on connecting these disciplines with community interest on needs, or with strengthening connections across disciplines at the community level. Cultural planning reverses this perspective. It begins by considering the circumstances and needs of a specific community. More specifically, its point of departure is how the cultural assets of resources of the community can contribute to reinforcing a unique sense of place (quoted in Donald, Morrow & Athanasiu, p.18).

The shift that Baeker describes prioritizes community and community needs as the origin point for the creation of cultural infrastructure, and this shift necessitates a re-envisioned government role from a top-down one of "public management focus on financing, regulating, owning" to a bottom-up focus on "enabling, supporting ('steering not rowing') combined with development approaches (Donald, Morrow & Athanasiu, p.18). These characteristics fit well with the creative ecology model described by Gollmitzer and Murray (2008) and Throsby (2001), and elaborate what a creative ecology framework might entail. Similarly, Neil Bradford (2004) foregrounds the need to move to a bottom-up approach to administering culture in regards to Canada's policies for creative cities:

> How can government move from the top-down silos (theatre, dance, museums, and so on) in cultural programming to a bottom-up approach viewing culture as a broad resource for human development and community creativity? How can governments meet the needs of both traditional flagship cultural institutions and grassroots street scene

> movements that typically have the fewest private resources and are the most experimental and risky? (p.12).

These are open-ended questions for Bradford, but are valid questions that need to be taken seriously if the small scale micro-economies of youth cultural activities are indeed the future of work as McRobbie (1999) suggests. Asking these types of questions allows for the development of an answer that could include grassroots community and youth cultural production as part of a creative ecology that is based in a bottom-up valuing of culture as a community resource, rather than a valuing culture solely as an economic engine.

Indeed, one possible application of this creative ecology framework is a broadening of the ways in which the case for culture is made. In his Fall 2008 cross-Canada forum tour, CCA director Alain Pineau solicited the public's opinion about the direction that the CCA's arts advocacy should take, and discussed the use of the economic impact of the arts as a way to make the case for culture in his Montréal forum. Pineau suggested that arts advocates need to reach out to other sectors to make the case for the arts, but should not rely exclusively on the economic impact of the arts and the business sector, and should also make the case for the arts by turning to the education and health sectors, for example, and argue in favour of the overall impact that the arts has on quality of life and wellbeing. This points to the need to work across policy sectors in order to support the creative industries. Similarly, Throsby (2008) discusses that accurately charting the economic impact of the arts may "legitimize cultural policy in the eyes of economic policy-makers" (p.230), but argues the economic impact of the arts alone will not make the case for the arts:

> Estimates of the economic size of the cultural industries may be of value for [arts advocacy] purposes because they demonstrate that the arts are not some minor economic backwater but account for a larger proportion

> of GDP or of aggregate employment than the casual observer might have imagined. However, such studies do not of themselves provide an argument for special treatment of the cultural sector, since many other industries contribute similar levels of output and employment in the economy. Likewise impact studies that purport to show the economic benefits of investment in culture may be interesting in their own terms, but will not provide a special case for culture if other lines of investment are likely to produce economic payoffs of similar magnitude (p.225).

In *Making a Single Case for the Arts: An International Perspective* (2008), Alexandra Slaby outlines that arts advocacy groups have moved away from making claims about the intrinsic worth of the arts, and have moved towards claims about the instrumental worth of the arts, focusing on benefits of the arts in areas including but going beyond economic impact, such as social impact, neighbourhood renewal, cultural employment, and academic performance. However, Slaby claims that we need to meld these intrinsic and instrumental claims behind arts advocacy. According to Slaby, using either intrinsic or instrumental arguments in isolation is ineffective because the intrinsic value of the arts, or the "art for art's sake" model is hard to define, and the instrumental claims around the tangible social impacts of the arts currently have a lack of concrete supporting data and weak methodological frameworks. Drawing on the Pew Charitable Trust's 2003 report *Policy Partners: Making the Case for State Investments in Culture*, Slaby calls for interweaving both intrinsic and instrumental approaches to arts advocacy, and states the need to

> Develop common resources; to build alliances in the various cultural fields 'to have clout in the policy arena'; to devise a unifying set of themes 'that communicate value to many different stakeholders'; 'to combine core values and instrumental values'; to clarify the incentives, business models and the general *modus operandi* of these greater cultural alliances; to build strategic partnerships between the public and the private sector and maintaining the personal relationships with the decision-makers (2008, p.10).

Moving towards the ability to make the kinds of claims and alliances mentioned here requires a broadening of current conceptual models of thinking about the creative industries so that these models foreground community relevancy; Slaby further cites the 2003 International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies World Summit which "rejected abstract, one-size-fits-all arts advocacy in favor of 'embedding' the value of the arts within local contexts, which has the advantage of gathering grassroots advocacy" (p.10). These identified directions for arts advocacy suggest the need for a broadened basis for making claims about the value of the arts, and also foregrounds the importance of making claims through particular community needs, and a creative ecology framework could meet the challenge of providing broad cross-sector claims that foreground local community development. We need to be able to discuss the intrinsic value of the arts, but also include the role of the arts in individual as well as community growth, while also considering economic growth.

The above-cited lack of a solid methodological basis behind claims about the instrumental value of the arts does not mean that this direction needs to be abandoned; rather, to reintegrate these types of claims within a larger creative ecology framework there is a need for continued research and data collection. In the Montréal CCA regional forum meeting, Pineau cautioned against using instrumental approaches alone to make the case for the arts, but also noted the difficulty of making the case along purely instrumental lines about the economic impact of the arts due to the lack of hard data to chart economic activity in the cultural fields, and to chart actual government spending in the arts. This returns to the question of a lack of adequate mapping of the creative industries, which is especially prevalent in the

Canadian context and with regards to youth activities. Kate Oakley (2004) notes the paucity of long-term evidence gathering by academics and the use of anecdote rather than hard data to support claims about the creative industries. Oakley argues that "*somebody* needs to be doing the long-term evidence gathering. Otherwise, we are left entirely at the mercy of governmental rhetoric" (p.71). Indeed, Tony Bennett (1992) also calls for "the need for intellectual work to be conducted in a manner such that, in both its substance and its style, it can be calculated to influence or service the conduct of identifiable agents within the region of culture concerned" (p.23). Simply put, if we are to work towards better supporting youth and influence policies in their service, we need better data to stand on. If academic research needs to take on the task of mapping the nature of youth cultural production such that researchers can make policy-oriented recommendations, data collection is one part of this task. Perhaps data collection has a role to play in building a creative ecology model to secure the legitimacy of the arts. Surely, youth has a key role to play in building a public support for the arts, both by using data collection to recognize trends in youth activities and life pathways as significant, but also by foregrounding youth as a part of the public that is not lumped in with children, or conceptualized only as students. Currently, youth do not have visibility in cultural policies, even if these policies have implications for their success as cultural producers. We need models that are aware of current modes of youth cultural production, and policies that register this presence. If youth are increasingly producers, not just consumers of art, then this segment of the population could become an important part of the process of securing the legitimacy of the arts in Canada.

Chapter 4:

Support for the Creative Industries in Britain, with Reference to Implications, Possibilities and Challenges for the Canadian Context

While Canada and Britain's cultural policies have long diverged, at its inception, Canada's cultural policy looked to Britain as a model. Canada no longer continues to look to Britain in terms of is cultural policy, but Britain's cultural policy still offers possibilities to consider in terms of how Canada could better administer its own cultural policy. Britain has taken up the potential of the creative industries at the policy level most notably with former Prime Minister Tony Blair's championing of "Cool Britannia," starting in 1997; the British government's support for the creative industries has continued under the helm of current Prime Minister Gordon Brown and the *Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy Britain* policy document, published in February 2008 by the Department of Media, Culture, and Sport. Britain is also home to the powerful independent think tank Demos, which has been credited with influencing New Labour policy under Tony Blair, including support for the creative industries. As a think tank, Demos is about to produce research to support its policy recommendations; Canada does not have a similar resource. Britain's cultural policy does not stand as a model to purely emulate, as some of the take-up of the creative industries in Britain has resulted in an overly facile wide-eyed celebration of the potentials of creative industries to correct problems of economic downtown, regional disparities in economic growth, and social exclusion. To this end, this chapter seeks not to celebrate of the potentials of the creative industries in Britain and import them into Canada; rather, this chapter seeks to map the potentials

and the limitations of current British cultural policy and examine if this policy has any possible applications in Canada. While the creative economy has been taken up in mainstream British political thought, has it been treated as a buzzword or has this uptake signaled real shifts in British policy and practice in the creative industries? If the *Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy* sets out a particular vision for of youth involvement in the creative industries and arts education, how do these models compare to Canada's? The first half of this chapter examines the potentials and limitations of *Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy* as a youth-centered policy, and the second half of this chapter turns to an examination of arts education and youth policy in Québec, and asks if Québec can learn anything from the British context.

Origins of Canadian Cultural Policy and New Policy Directions for Britain

With the release of the Massey report in 1957, Canada looked to Britain to model its cultural infrastructure. Britain was seen as a desirable model because the British Art Council provided the "arm's length" approach to administering culture, but also provided a model to use to ward off the growing influx of American cultural products and influence. As such, the Canada Council was conceived in a liberal humanist vein directed towards the betterment of the Canada citizenry, and was also tied to the project of building the modern Canadian nation-state:

> The Canada Council was a product of the intellectual climate of the times. For Massey and his ilk, the big story of modern Western history was the spread of democratic rights and privileges. Rising literacy rates opened the possibility of cultivating the kind of responsible, civic-minded, and judicious citizenry required to make mass democracy work. In the Canadian context, this process was intertwined with nation

> building as the country defined an independent destiny in the postwar world. Canada needed culture both to succeed as a liberal democracy and to claim its place among civilized nations (Litt, 2007, p.14).

Forty years later, Britain reconceived its cultural infrastructure with the election of New Labour and the creation of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in 1997. From its outset, the DCMS set up the Creative Industries Task Force (CITF), which was charged with defining, mapping, and measuring the creative industries. The CITF has released two Creative Industries Mapping Documents, one in 1998 and one in 2001, and these documents have been key to the uptake of the creative economy as a central facet of the British economy by policy makers.

Kate Oakley (2004) notes that this uptake of the creative economy has taken on excessive dimensions, stating that any policy document on regional development in the UK will mention the creative industries: "No region of the country, whatever its industrial base, human capital stock, scale or history, is safe from the need for a 'creative hub' or 'cultural quarter'" (p.68). Oakley characterizes this turn to champion the creative industries as a quick fix to serious economic problems: "as industrial decline continues and the strength of the sterling further erodes what is left of our manufacturing industries, many policy makers are turning to the creative industries as a way out of the mess, and moreover, one that they believe is more resilient and more rooted in local circumstances" (p.68). Ultimately, Oakley is skeptical of this wholesale uptake of the creative industries at the policy level, noting "as the rhetoric and expectations grow, the evidence base on which they rest seems to shrink and we are currently stumbling, fairly blindly, in the belief that the creative industries have a well-understood role in economic development, regeneration and social inclusion" (p.69). Beyond this lack of data to support the championing of the creative

industries, Oakley (2004) identifies problems in the conception of much creative industries policy. She notes that many projects funded through creative economy policy only receive short-term funding rather than long-term systematic funding, and this promotes competition rather than cooperation amongst organizations applying for funding. She also notes problems in the narrowness of educational curriculum which promotes "early specialization" in students, which might not adequately prepare them for careers in the creative industries, as employment in these industries may require a diverse rather than specialized skill set.

Some of Oakley's criticisms have been implicitly answered by new policy developed by the DCMS. This policy may in fact envision long-term funding, and may rework the cultural training that children and youth receive in schools. In February 2008, the DCMS published the policy document *Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy*. This document is the DCMS' first comprehensive plan for governmental support of the creative industries in the UK, and the document opens by noting that "creative industries must move from the margins to the mainstream of economic and policy thinking" (p.4). In order to "make Britain the world's creative hub" (p.6), the document targets support for arts education in schools, aims to clarify the transition between the education system and work in the creative industries, and also offers support for businesses and research. While Chapter 3 noted that youth, and the needs that are specific to contemporary youth cultural producers, are not visible at the policy level in Canada, youth form a key underpinning of this DCMS policy document. Creating economic growth through the creative industries requires people to enter in this field, and the document focuses on preparing youth to work in the creative industries. To this end, the document is in part directed towards gearing

school experiences to relate to careers in the creative industries. This document calls for the creation of new programs to improve arts education in schools through the "Find Your Talent" program, which builds on the "Creative Partnerships" program, which targeted disadvantaged children; "Find Your Talent" now targets all British children and young people. This program entails that the British curriculum will devote "five hours of culture a week for children and young people," (p.7) both in school and out of school at cultural sites. This program is centered around both arts appreciation and cultural production, and as such, envisions the role of children and youth both as arts audiences and cultural producers. Possible activities of the "Find Your Talent" program include having the chance to "produce creative writing, or listen to authors," "use library and archive services," "visit exhibitions, galleries, or museums," "learn about and make films, digital, or new media art" or "learn a musical instrument" (p.7). The document suggests that visiting sites means that curriculum becomes clearer to students and their skills are consistently improved. While there are links between individual school learning and the wider community in this program, the wording of this program suggests an individual-centered take on cultural production: while the program includes community visits, it does not suggest collaborative or community-based work so much as it suggests self-discovery through the arts. To this end, this policy does not answer the call of media education academics discussed in Chapter 2, such as David Buckingham, Julian Sefton Green, and Henry Jenkins, who want creativity to be understood as a social and collaborative process. Understanding the social and collaborative dimensions of cultural production are important for moving towards a creative ecology framework,

but as we will see below, the *Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy* remains mostly in an economically-based model of cultural policy.

***Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy*: Implications for Youth and Cultural Employment**

A strength of the *Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy* policy is that it works towards offering a comprehensive framework to address the areas of cultural employment. This policy document focuses on the transition between school and work, which is an important transition to consider, as there is a gap in research between youths' experiences in school and later experiences in the workforce. The DCMS policy provides measures to "help untangle the complicated and fragmented paths into a creative career and provide new opportunities for training and work experience" in order to "ensure that young people have real opportunities to develop… for too many at the moment, the chance to start a career in the creative industries means moving to London, working for free or knowing someone who can get you a foot in the door" (p.7). As seen in previous chapters, success in the creative industries often requires adeptness in navigating informal networks; the informality of these networks also leads to social exclusion, as not everyone has access to these networks when they are so intangible. One measure that the DCMS document outlines to formalize these informal networks is to create "clear career paths" (p.21), and one mechanism to create this clarity is the creation of 5000 new internships a year by 2013, but the document also outlines a goal to have an internship available for any qualified high school graduate who desires it by the year 2013. The DCMS hopes that more transparent access and available internships will result in a more

diverse workforce, as it "not clear that opportunities for the recruitment of unpaid young people as interns, common in most creative industries, are distributed evenly across all socio-economic groups. We expect an important spin-off from better routes into creative careers to be an improvement in the diversity of the industry" (p.24). Here, the assumption is that internships provide clarity in navigating the murky waters of creating careers in the creative industries, but the opening anecdote of Clarissa Buchanan's experiences as an intern in Chapter 1 suggest otherwise. Internships can often cyclically repeat without leading into permanent employment; without more equitable hiring policies and more available jobs, internships themselves cannot create equity.

Nonetheless, the new DCMS policy sets out to find mechanisms to correct a lack of diversity in the creative industries, and champions transparency in career pathways as a solution to the lack of diversity in employment in the creative industries. Beyond the creation of more internships, another mechanism that is forwarded to create transparency is the development of the *Creative Choices* website, www.creative-choices.co.uk, which the DCMS touts as the "first industry and user-led online service to fully exploit the potential of social media and give individuals a pathway to shape their own destiny," noting that the "core of the new service will be the ability to find and compare all the courses, job, people and placements that are available across the sector." As with the creation of more internships and "effective advice literature," (p.21), this website is charged with minimizing confusion about how one might go about creating a career in the creative industries:

> Any young person contemplating a higher education course could find it difficult to make an informed choice from the extraordinary range on offer. For example, there are currently over a thousand courses that include 'film' in their title and over 350 with the word 'television'. There

> are nearly one hundred courses related to computer games listed in the Skillset/British Film Institute database, and the number of courses related to information technology runs into the thousands (p.20).

Again, these mechanisms assume that the solution to problems of equity relies on improving various kinds of training; this assumption does not examine the nature of hiring and employment in the creative industries themselves.

Another aspect of formalizing the informality of careers in the creative industries in the DCMS policy is establishing various networks that youth can access. One part of this initiative is the creation of academic "hubs" that link schools with further and higher education. The goal here is to provide "end to end" development of creative skills for youth 14-25. The policy sets out to achieve this goal through the sharing of curricula, industry contacts, and facilities between schools and universities, and provide mentoring for students and exchanges for staff. These collaborations between universities and community youth arts programs can be found in Canada as well; for example, The Beat of Boyle Street is a collaborative program between the music program of the University of Alberta and the Boyle Street Education Centre. The Beat of Boyle Street uses hip hop as a tool for engaging primarily Aboriginal at-risk youth, and targets individual development, youth voice, and crime deterrence. The program offers credit courses in areas such as digital design and media, and offers instruction to assist youth to make music, remixes, rap, spoken-word poetry, and hip hop dance tracks. Their website states:

> Creative expressions connect with a vital component of young people's lives, and are readily accessible for individuals who find written and oral communications difficult. In addition, creative expression can open doors for youth to establish positive habits related to self-image. The Beat of Boyle Street, therefore, creates an opportunity to move youth-at-risk from activities related to crime and self-destruction toward positive alternatives (The Beat of Boyle Street homepage, 2009).

To this end, the website states that the central question of the project is "How do these youth make sense of their lives through the music they listen to, the sounds of the city they inhabit, and the music they will create?" (The Beat of Boyle Street homepage, 2009). This question is centered around personal goals of youth identity, self-expression and empowerment, and not around youth engagement with communities or economic development; thus, it demonstrates a clear difference in its conception in comparison to the British policy. The stated mission of the Boyle Street project does not address youth as workers; while it implicitly focuses on capacity building (which could potentially relate to careers), this is articulated around personal development lines. Another key difference is that the Boyle Street project, and others like it, can often be found in major city centres (the Boyle Street project is located in Edmonton), and the DCMS policy sets out to give access to these types of opportunities to youth in regions outside of major urban centres, and aims to implement these programs for all youth. For these reasons, the British policy offers some interesting mechanisms to consider in order to better support youth cultural production.

Potential and Limitations of the DCMS policy

While we may be able to find comparable programs that provide some of the same provisions in *Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy* in Canada, these projects are often the result of the initiative of hardworking people who are committed to working with youth, and who are often youth themselves, and these programs often do not have long-term stability. The DCMS policy may work

towards providing some of this long-term stability for arts funding by developing a comprehensive policy framework for the cultural sector. The desire for more sustainable funding is often voiced in surveys of youth arts organizations. One such survey found that

> Short-term project-to-project funding, although useful in some situations, poses numerous problems, particularly for youth-led organizations and should be addressed through core funding involving a staggered multi-year, multi-funder approach. For example, this could involve three-four year funding cycles, with a different funder ready to come on board for a similar period of time and then perhaps a third funder (or the original funder) lined up for the next cycle. This kind of rotation system would require long-term planning and collaboration and would result in increased stability, improved continuity and longevity of programs, organizations and staff. This would enable organizations to make ten year plans with a certain level of confidence (Hamilton, 2006, p.25).

The Grassroots Youth Collaborative (GYC) is an organization that is made up of representatives from six youth-led, non-profit, community-based organizations in the Greater Toronto area, and has produced a report on best practices in youth-led organizations as well as "their shared problems, challenges, and recommendations for youth organizers, funders, policy-makers and politicians" (Warner, 2005, p.5). The report entitled *Youth on Youth: Grassroots Youth Collaborative on Youth-Led Organizing in the City of Toronto* notes that the struggles that these organizations face is a lack of core and multi-year funding, as well as "organizational and program stability, sustainability, and capacity" (Warner, 2005, p.47). This challenge also results in high program/staff turnover, as staff often feel "overwhelmed … and undersupported" (p.48). The study cites high staff turnover as a result of "project cessation and/or work overload, underpay and under support" (Warner, 2005, p.50). Shahina Sayina, the Executive Director of For Youth Initiative (FYI), one of the organizations that is a member of the GYC, comments that "the result of a lack of [core] funding … is

that there isn't enough funding to hire more staff to run programs" (Warner, 2005, p.49). Those interviewed in the report felt that there is a current climate of rhetoric that supports youth activities, but actual policy and commitment in this area is lacking:

> Many of the focus group participants felt that the recent embrace of youth issues and youth-led organizing in the discourse of government and funding agencies and bodies was more rhetorical than actual, judging from the actual commitment of tangible resources to youth-led organizations by the latter in the experience of GYC member organizations" (Warner, 2005, p.54).

Moreover, the GYC report suggests that what those working with youth truly desire is an integrated approach that positions youth as community members. This would result in a more holistic and long-term policy focus:

> GYC member organization staff unanimously endorsed a prevention-focused, community development approach to youth-led organizing, an approach that they felt was sorely lacking in the vision and/or mandate of government agencies and funding bodies whom tended to work on a short time scale, project by project, with little integration within, or support of, a broader long-term, holistic strategy. Ultimately, it was widely argued, youth health and well-being needed to be connected to the health and well-being of the wider communities in which they lived. As such, youth policy focus needed to be part and parcel of a larger vision and strategy aimed at increasing the health, strength, and social infrastructure of communities (Warner, 2005, p.55).

These comments does not specifically link youth policy with a creative ecology, but the connection of youth health and wellbeing to the health and wellbeing of wider communities could fit within a comprehensive policy framework that also underscores cultural production. Indeed, what is often cited in surveys of youth arts organizations is the need for a broad vision of the value of culture such that youth are included as part of the discussion:

> One of the key research finding resulting from the focus groups was the importance of a more holistic, long-term, community and human development approach to funding for undervoiced, racialized youth

> and young adults, with much more cross-sectoral collaboration and communication not only amongst the funders themselves but also between funders and fundees (Hamilton, 2006, p.7).

Ultimately, these positions move past an instrumental argument about the value of culture, and towards a vision similar to the creative ecology framework that was discussed in Chapter 3.

While the DCMS policy might explicitly yoke youth with employment and economic development, it does not ground these links in any larger vision of community development or creative ecology, and retains an economic-based instrumental vision of the value of culture. To this end, it does not speak to the broader issues that the GYC addresses, cited above. While there is some minor reference to the collective nature of work in the creative industries, noting that "ideas are generated through individual and collective talent and innovation" (p.14), the rhetoric of *Creative Britain: New Talents for the New Economy* is rooted at the level of the individual, and relies on a development model of nurturing individual creativity and "discover[ing] talent where is might otherwise have lain hidden" (p.14). This individually-driven model suggests that "talent" is innate in everyone, and only needs to be "unlocked" or "found." As mentioned above, the policy document addresses the lack of diversity in creative industries employment, but suggests the clearer routes will remedy this problem. However, this proposed remedy does not take into account systemic inequalities and lack of access to participation that sit deeper than lack of knowledge about where to participate. The document states that "only an individual can decide to put in the huge effort required to reach the top of these professions … but for those talented individuals willing to put in that effort, government should do everything it can to remove any barriers to achieving their ambition" (p.21). This

meritocratic model does not address the fact that there may be systemic barriers that preclude individuals from being "willing" to put in the effort. By wording these issues around the category of the individual, this document does not fully address systemic barriers that undermine full access and participation, even if lack of diversity is foregrounded as a problem. Indeed, McRobbie (2004) notes that "New Labour appears to be inventing a new youth-driven meritocracy" (p.101) and that individualization of the workforce means "there is a much expanded workforce comprising of freelance, casualized and project-linked persons, and there is also a more fiercely neo-liberal model in place with the blessings of government for overseeing the further de-regulation and commercialization of the cultural and creative sector" (2002b, p.518). McRobbie's claims ring true when considering this new DCMS policy; while youth are foregrounded in this policy, a neo-liberal model of economic development is truly at its core.

The instrumental value of culture persists through the DCMS policy, and while values other than economic benefits are mentioned in this policy, the economic impact of the arts is consistently underlined. As discussed in Chapter 3, a creative ecology might entail melding intrinsic and instrumental claims around the arts with an eye to individual and community development. On the one hand, the DCMS policy is unique in that it highlights the role that youth have to play in the creative economy, and this recognition of youth is usually lacking in discussions of the creative economy. On the other hand, this policy is quite limited, as it sees the value of the arts only as generator of income. For example, there is an acknowledgment in the DCMS policy that the "Find Your Talent" program will develop children and youth in ways other than providing them with job skills, as the document lists the

benefits of arts for youth to include pleasure, confidence and skills, life-long passion, but also follows this up with employment as a benefit as well. The document is undergirded by the notion that "working in the creative sector is the ambition of many young people" (p.22), and this results in creating more links between "education [and] the world of work" (p.8). While it is true that there is a need to create links between education and the world of work, especially in terms of the creative economy, the rhetoric of the document casts an instrumentalist view on the purposes of education and the role of the arts in the lives of youth and the wellbeing of communities. Moreover, the goals of this policy document could also potentially cause a surplus of creative industry hopefuls. The document continually suggests the need to create a "wider pool of talent" (p.19) of available workers, and assumes this pool of talent will be able to find available employment in the creative industries. Due to "global competition" in the creative fields, "creative industries need the best possible business support structures in place and an abundant pool of talented people with the right skills to meet the needs of an expanding creative sector" (p.8). The vision for the creative industries comes out of a business model, and foregrounds business/financial support for the creative industries, especially in terms of employment, but other types of support are not highlighted.

While much of this policy document targets young people, it does not take into consideration the growing trends towards youth self-employment in creative fields, and this trend may require different types of support and pathways than that of direct employment in "the exciting worlds of music, television, fashion and film" (p.6). This policy does not address the demographic of youth that Leadbeater and Oakley (1999) characterize as "the Independents," discussed in Chapter 3, nor does it

address the unique needs that youth in this demographic have as they enter into the creative industries: needs that may not be filled with internships and a database of courses and jobs. The policy does set up a Young Enterprise Quickstart Music Programme that seeks to assist young entrepreneurs who want to operate their own music businesses by providing them with support from business and industry mentors. But this plan creates links to a model of the music industry that is dying out, and names industry partners such as Sony BMG, which does not address the ad-hoc and independent nature of much youth involvement in the music industry. The document underlines the government's role in giving "support for creativity from the grassroots to the global stage" (p.7), but the assumption here is that grassroots involvement in creative fields will necessarily attempt to move into global arenas, which has the connotations of the industrialized cultural industries such as David Hesmondhalgh's core cultural industries discussed in Chapter 2. It is difficult to imagine where youth pathways in the creative industries such as those that are intentionally small-scale and community-oriented, discussed below and in Chapter 5, would fit in the DCMS policy framework. There are no provisions in this document for "grassroots" cultural production that desire to remain "grassroots," and there is no vision for grassroots community development through small-scale creative industries that have youth at the helm. While the DCMS policy provides a comprehensive framework for the creative economy, the theoretical underpinnings of this framework are limited to economic ones, and need to be broader to better support youth practices.

As we have seen, the DCMS policy only sets out an economic view of the arts, and develops a vision of Britain where "local economies in our biggest cities are

driven by creativity," (p.8), but this vision of "creativity" is hazy and undefined. Throughout the document, "the Government's fundamental belief in the role of public funding to stimulate creativity" (p.8) is underlined, but the theoretical underpinnings of the use of the concept of creativity are never specified. At a debate about the British government's new strategy in the arts, Terry Illiot, the director of the Film Business Academy at Cass Business School, pointed out this lack of theoretical underpinning, suggested that "without an underlying theory of creativity on which to ground itself … the many ideas and schemes in the paper would founder, and the industry would suffer many unintended consequences as a result" (Whitehead, 2008). As such, the policy risks falling into Richard Florida's definition of creativity as innovation and problem-solving, discussed in Chapter 2, which is so large and celebratory that it fails to grapple with the limitations and challenges of creative employment.

While the DCMS policy may be flawed and limited in many aspects of its conception, it nonetheless demonstrates an understanding of the link between the creative industries and economic growth that current trends in cultural policy in Canada seem to overlook. At the above mentioned debate on the future of the creative industries in Britain, English Arts Minister Estelle Morris stated that the reason behind the New Labour's championing of the creative industries as a major area of economic investment is

> Quite simple. It is the expansion. It is the sheer numbers of people who now work in that sector: jobs, employment, income for families. That is something that is unanswerable. The amount of money that the creative industries now bring to the GDP, £60bn a year - 7.3% of our total wealth - and the sector has been doubling in relationship to any other sector, growing at twice the rate of any other sector. Politicians understand that language (Whitehead, 2008).

This matter is perhaps not as simple as Morris states, as Canada has yet to develop a comprehensive policy framework for its cultural sector, even if recent figures produced by an independent think tank, the Conference Board of Canada, suggest that the cultural industries earned $84.6 billion, or 7.4% of the GDP in Canada in 2007 (Conference Board of Canada, 2008). Politicians do not seem to universally "understand" this language, and have yet to recognize the role that the creative industries can play in creating economic growth, even in times of crisis. To this end, *Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy* offers interesting avenues to explore in terms of cultural policy development for Canada, but this cultural policy development also needs to be joined with a more holistic vision of community development that is not solely driven by an economic engine, and also needs to more closely examine that role that small-scale youth cultural production has to play within the ecology of the creative economy.

Arts Education and Cultural and Youth Policy in Québec

As we have seen, in its targeting of youth involvement in the creative industries, the British policy document sets out a particular vision of arts education. Of course, arts education is not unique to Britain; before asking if there are any possible applications of *Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy* to the Canadian context in terms of its vision of arts education, we need to map out the current models of arts education in Canada. Within Canada, education is administered provincially; amongst these provincial jurisdictions, Québec is most often touted as an arts-friendly haven. Participants in the *Next Generation of Artists and Arts Audience*

study from Québec noted that "Québec is considered an attractive place for artists from across the country, due to the size of the perceived audiences, and lower cost-of-living expenses in urban areas like Montréal" (DECODE, 2007, p.47). While Québec may have enviable cultural infrastructure and a reputation as an arts-friendly place, this does not mean that making a career in the arts in Québec is struggle-free. In the *Next Generation* study, "some participants [from Québec] said that they are often forced to make sacrifices in time and money to support their involvement as artistic creators and professionals. Many participants said they believe they are making an investment or making sacrifices to gain the experience they expect they will need as professionals. Others, however, said they were beginning to question their involvement in the arts due to personal and financial struggles" (DECODE, 2007, p.47). Moreover, long-term funding to support and sustain community arts organization may be no more available in Québec than in any other province:

> The Arts Network for Children and Youth has identified, along with others, [there is] a lack of ongoing funding, infrastructure and training for artists [that] is needed to support existing programs and to support the creation of much-needed program expansion at the municipal levels. Many have the misconception that art programs are readily available to all children and youth in Canada and are well funded, when in fact only a small percentage of families can afford to send their children to arts programs and in some communities they do not exist. Only 25 – 30% of children and youth in Canada ever have a "creative arts experience" in their life outside of the school setting. As well ongoing, operational funding does not exist at the Federal, Provincial and Municipal levels to support and sustain community based programs" (Albright, 2008, p.2).

Nonetheless, at the policy level, Québec is noted for its existing infrastructure of cultural legislation, including provincial Status of the Artist legislation; in fact, Québec was the first jurisdiction in Canada to implement such legislation in 1988, and the Québec legislation become the model for Canada's federal legislation in this

area in 1992. Since Québec implemented its legislation in 1988, Saskatchewan has been the only other province to implement such legislation, in 2002. Gattinger and Saint-Pierre (2008) identify that Québec has always had a strong articulation of national identity and culture, and "up until the 1960s, government initiatives were based on one major objective: protecting, increasing and transmitting, for purposes of prestige and philanthropy, Québec's national heritage in all of its forms" (p.344). After the 1960s, Québec initiatives focused on the democratization of culture, including "policies to supporting creation, developing infrastructure for production and broadcasting, professionalizing cultural activities, and promoting widespread participation" (p.344), as well as forging links with foreign countries within la Francophonie. According to Gattinger and Saint Pierre, in the 1980s in Québec, culture became aligned with economy and associated industries; the professionalization of culture saw the development of Québec's cultural policy, the *Politique Culturelle du Québec*, and the creation of the *Conseil des Arts et Des Lettres du Québec* in 2002.

While it is not specifically cultural in nature, Québec also has a comprehensive youth policy framework. The first version of this policy, introduced in 2001 and entitled *Bringing Youth into Québec's Mainstream*, sets out mechanisms to ensure that youth achieve "full citizenship" by fostering solidarity between generations through "consistent youth-oriented action by the government" (2001, p.9). Above all, this youth policy framework is tied to a nationalist vision of Québec's maintenance and renewal by its younger generation, who will "build the Québec of tomorrow." The policy framework aims at full youth participation and belonging in society, and the themes of youth health, education, and employment have been

emphasized across its 2001, 2006, and 2009 incarnations. Culture is not a main part of this vision of youth citizenship, though it does crop up in these policy documents. In the 2001 *Bringing Youth into Québec's Mainstream* document, "culture, creativity and innovation" is tied to the project of "engaging society in a culture of generational renewal." This commitment to culture begins with a nationalist vision of "a lasting artistic and cultural heritage," and outlines strategies for young people to become invested in Québec's culture, such as to

> Involve young people in the development of resources and cultural property; make young people even more aware of the history of former generations and the characteristics of Québec culture which shape their very identity; make young people aware of the original, diverse and dynamic artistic and cultural practices in Québec by providing better access to facilities where all types of art forms are shown (2001, p.28).

The majority of these provisions are mechanisms to ensure that Québec youth will continue to act as consumers of culture, but there are also provisions that address youth as cultural producers:

> It is important therefore to continue to foster this vitality by encouraging the creative work of young artists and the upcoming generation. To allow young people to express themselves, develop their creativity and innovate, the strategies to be pursued must aim to: promote creativity among young people, and provide better access to places where they can express themselves creatively; welcome, recognize and support the artistic creations of young people, by showing the creations on a local, national and international scale; support the creativity and artistic expression of young people through school and extracurricular activities to develop their critical judgment and increase their contact with the artistic community (2001, p.28).

While these strategies see youth as active producers of culture, there are no specific links here between cultural production and employment/entrepreneurship, which form major themes of Québec's youth policy. In the subsequent incarnations of Québec's youth policy, there are even fewer provisions that relate to culture; the 2009 document *Investing in Youth: Empowering Québec's Future* mentions the need to

"encourage artistic expression and introduce young people to arts and culture at school" and "encourage young people to pursue leisure and cultural activities" (p.72) as "complementary measures."

This lack of link between culture and employment continues in Québec's vision of arts education. While Gattinger and Saint-Pierre (2008) identify the growth of an economic emphasis on culture in the 1980s in Québec, the Québec Education Plan (QEP), revamped in 2004, does not primarily envision arts education as a mechanism for career pathways or economic growth, as is seen in the British *Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy* policy. Rather, the QEP is oriented around liberal humanistic lines of self-development which is also connected to a nationalist vision of a well-formed citizenry. The QEP sees this personal development as integral to society as a whole; in his foreword, Québec Minister of Education Pierre Reid comments that role of the QEP is "preparing young people to become full–fledged citizens." In the QEP, claims in favour of arts education recall earlier models of culture as a mechanism to ensure Québec national identity. Arts education is said to "develop, affirm, and safeguard cultural identity" in the face of homogenizing effects of commercial interests that have stake in the arts (MELS, 2004, p.67). Here there is an implicit bifurcation of "real" art and "commercial" art, and this bifurcation does not recognize the interests that many young people have in producing and working in so-called "commercial" fields of cultural production. This humanistic rhetoric of personal enrichment is seen in the discussion of "the creative dynamic" which the QEP defines as a "process and a procedure" that begins with "inspiration" that is then followed by development of the work, and then distancing oneself from the work (pp.333-334). While the QEP sets out that learning cultural

references are part of arts education, this rhetoric of "inspiration" seems to divorce art from socio-historical contexts, and couch art in the language of individual expression. To this end, the language of the QEP recalls the individualistic rhetoric of the "Find Your Talent" program, as neither sees art as a collaborative, social, or community project. Ultimately, neither the QEP or the "Find Your Talent" program answers Henry Jenkins or Ruben Gaztambide-Fernandez's calls (discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, respectively) for an arts education that designates art as a social process based in public interaction, that emerges out of affinity spaces where students create their own creative networks, or that works towards affirming the role of the artist as engaging in a democratic public sphere.

When the QEP does address careers in the arts, it is couched in the rhetoric of personal development, and not in purely economic terms like in *Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy*. The QEP states that

> The arts stimulate bodily awareness, nourish the imagination and contribute to the development of self-esteem. In practising an art, students draw on all aspects of the self—body, voice, imagination, culture—in order to convey their perception of reality and world-view. They make use of a symbolic language that opens up new perspectives on themselves, others and their environment. Arts education, in helping to empower students, contributes to the construction of their identity and the enrichment of their world-view. It also helps narrow the gap between academic learning and the working world. When pursued on a consistent basis throughout their secondary studies, it can pave the way for studies leading to a wide variety of professions and occupations related to the arts and culture (MELS, 2004, p.67).

Of interest in this passage is the space giving to a description of the enrichment of the student in comparison to the space given to the description of professions and occupations in the arts. Developing skills for the realm of work or future post-secondary study is part of the QEP, as this document sets out that schools' "threefold mission" is to "provide instruction in a knowledge-based world," "to

socialize students in a pluralistic world," and "to provide qualifications in a changing world" (p.5). While the policy document might set out a mission to provide qualifications, interestingly, the only careers that are specifically mentioned across all the subject areas in the QEP are the ones that are mentioned in the arts education subject area. In each subject area (i.e. math, science, arts education, etc.), program content is outlined, and each section of program content contains the "cultural references" that students will learn. For example, the cultural references of the math program content include learning about famous mathematicians, including Euclid. In arts education, the cultural references include learning about careers in the arts. Careers related to visual arts include "artist, media designer, designer, architect, photographer, filmmaker, television producer, videographer, graphic artist, computer graphics artist, art critic, art historian, illustrator, comic strip artist, artisan, art teacher, museum curator, conservation and restoration technician for art works and objects, museum educator, etc" (p.376). These careers named in this broad list demonstrate an awareness of the importance of the creative industries even if this is not a main focus of the arts education section of the QEP; these careers would also seem to fit in the "commercial" stake in the arts that the overall mission of arts education as set out by the QEP is meant to ward against. Beyond this mention of careers in the arts, though, the QEP does not include in its arts education any instruction of the logistics that are required to make a career in any of the above-named areas; students are invited to learn that these careers exist, but are not invited to see themselves in these careers or move towards obtaining them.

The inclusion of the "cultural references" of the multiplicity of current careers in the creative industries cited above is a strength of the QEP, and while the

QEP may not include explicit instruction around how one makes a career in the creative industries, its vision of arts education values cultural production. Like the "Find Your Talent" program in the DCMS policy, the QEP casts youth as both arts audiences and cultural producers. The QEP makes mention of visiting cultural sites, as "[children and youth] also stand to benefit if their arts education is enhanced by visits to cultural sites, meetings with artists and active participation in the artistic life of the school" (p.67), but this is not the main focus of its vision of arts education, nor are cultural visits specifically mentioned in the "Program Content" sections of the Drama, Visuals Arts, Dance, and Music curricula. A more predominant focus of the QEP's vision is cultural production. Each of the subject areas in arts education (drama, visual arts, dance, music) is structured around developing subject-specific competencies, and these competencies are oriented around learning by doing. While the wording of each competency varies according to the specific subject, all of the competencies follow the model of creating a work, performing this work, and then learning to appreciate other works. This suggests that cultural production and arts appreciation are joined, and audience and artist are articulated as emerging out of the same process. This focus on project-based learning is another strength of the QEP; however, a broader vision of creativity as a social process, and clearer links between the world of arts education and the world of work in the creative industries would make arts education more relevant to the needs of contemporary youth. One avenue for the creation of more relevant arts education could be the designation of the school as a "hub," as the DCMS policy sets out, and is furthered discussed in Chapter 7. Above all, we need broader cultural policy frameworks that make links

between education and youth creative practices without resorting to a narrow economic model.

Jeunes Volontaires: Project-Based Entrepreneurship for Youth in Québec

As discussed above, the *Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy* makes provisions for youth-directed projects, such as the Young Enterprise Quickstart Music Programme that seeks to assist young entrepreneurs who want to operate their own music businesses by providing them with support from business and industry mentors. This particular program may not be relevant to youth engagement with small-scale self-generated practices, as it makes links to facets of the music industry that are dying out. Québec also has funding for youth-directed projects; one grant that specifically targets youth, and aims to help entry into the workforce, is the Jeunes Volontaires grant. While the Jeunes Volontaires is not specifically an arts grant, Montréal-based musician Katherine Peacock identifies that is known through "word of mouth of artists" as "fairly easy to get;" for this reason, the grant has a certain visibility amongst young cultural producers in Montréal (K. Peacock, personal interview, June 2009). Indeed, when I attended a public information session about the Jeunes Volontaires grant, all of the examples of potential projects were arts-related (music, dance, photography, writing) even if the grant is not earmarked for art projects specifically. Jeunes Volontaires runs monthly information sessions, and there were nearly 50 youth present at the one that I attended, which demonstrates the demand for support for small-scale youth projects. Funded through Emploi Québec, Jeunes Volontaires offers project grants for youth aged 16-29 who live on the island

of Montréal and "have trouble entering the labour market." The grant allows them "a chance to acquire skills while working on a project that [they] have designed. [They] can develop and implement projects in fields that interest [them], e.g. agriculture, arts, culture, communications, community services, environment, tourism" (Emploi Québec, 2009). Projects can run from 9-52 weeks, and Jeunes Volontaires is marketed as an opportunity to "enhance your knowledge, improve your skills, creativity and self-reliance, work with professionals, make contacts and friends [and] gain an enriching experience" (Emploi Québec, 2009). Youth are paid to work on a project of their choice, but the rhetoric around the Jeunes Volontaires grant is to become "job ready" rather than work towards a career in the project area itself. The grant program has built-in mechanisms to promote this job readiness, such as requiring youth to find a mentor who has experience related to the project, and to produce an operating budget. Despite this rhetoric around promoting job readiness, Katherine Peacock's experience of this grant program was that it "in no way helped my furthering my career" (K. Peacock, personal interview, June 2009).

Katherine was first introduced to the Jeunes Volontaires grant when an ex-bandmate applied for the grant for their now-defunct band Dorian Hatchet. She identifies that "he made it sound like it's all this bureaucratic stuff and then they give you a bit of money to do your music," but Katherine's own experience of working with this granting organization proved to be more difficult. A year after the completion of the Jeunes Volontaires grant for Dorian Hatchet, Katherine decided to apply for a Jeunes Volontaires grant for her own project, the Coal Choir, an experimental folk choir that Katherine leads and composes music for. She describes her application process as a difficult and frustrating experience:

> A year later, I was like maybe I'll try to do it myself for the choir and that's when I found out all the bureaucratic stuff. I right away realized what I wanted to do was no way in keeping with what they wanted. They want you to have a highly marketable product that will make you make more money in the future. Basically they want to see that you're geared towards making money. A choir is about community. The sort of music that is only possible through government support. The whole idea, they didn't like it, that we were going to perform three shows at the Mile End Mission, kind of benefit shows. That was a big no-no. The whole idea of community benefits were not want they wanted. The reason that I got the grant was because Jane McGarrigle was my mentor. They actually ended up not talking to me because they didn't like what I had to say and Jane realized what they wanted so she was like 'well, through this, Katherine could learn how to produce and orchestrate,' all these kinds of marketable skills. They were also like 'How's Anna?' 'How's Kate?' They were distracted and they gave me the grant (K. Peacock, personal interview, June 2009).

Despite the lack of enthusiasm for Katherine's community-based project that was not seeking to gain profits, Katherine feels like structure of the grant does not allow for projects that are larger in scale, even if her small-scale project was not seen as desirable.

> They give so little money that all I wanted to do was all I could have done. There's no way you can record an album on $900. Their whole expectations are a little bit weird about that. The whole idea is when you're an artist you sort of rely on start-up funds from elsewhere. It all seemed kind of backwards. It was a lot of manipulating details to make them fit so that you can get your forms approved. I guess most grant stuff is a kind of like that, but it was a little bit frustrating (K. Peacock, personal interview, June 2009).

Here, Katherine refers to the small operating budget that the Jeunes Volontaires grant provides. The grant also provides a small stipend of pay—$300 per month, unless the recipient has received employment insurance within the last four years, in which case the stipend is greater. The Jeunes Volontaires grant does not allow the recipient to work at a job for more than 20 hours per week, and assumes that the recipient will consecrate 20 hours per week to the project. At $300 per month, 20 hours of work on a project translates into $3.75 per hour. However, that nearly 50

young people attended an information session that runs monthly suggests both the need for these small-scale funds, and the willingness of young people to undertake the bureaucratic process that is the Jeunes Volontaires application process in order to access this small amount of project money. Despite frustrations with the Jeunes Volontaires granting system, Katherine voices that the small amount of money that the grant provides allowed her to offer some payment to friends for services: small-scale grassroots cultural production often relies on an informal network of favours and assistance from friends:

> It was nice to be able to pay my friends a little bit, like a kind of honorarium for recording and mixing and stuff that would have cost hundreds of dollars to pay a full amount for, but it was all kind of token stuff. There's no way that that small amount of money can help you establish yourself in the marketplace! (K. Peacock, personal interview, June 2009).

Beyond this, Katherine also credits her experience at Jeunes Volontaires with giving her the confidence to seek out other grants: "It's kind of got me in the bureaucratic mindset, like, OK, I can jump through these hoops."

Overall, Katherine felt a lack of support from this program, and questions if she should have been given the grant at all. She states:

> The administrators were very set it their ways. What would have been better would be seeing what I was actually trying to do and maybe made suggestions about what could have been better. They could have been like 'Jeunes Volontaires is about trying to get young creative entrepreneurs set in the marketplace, so this is not for you but this is how we can help you get a different kind of grant.' But they weren't interested in veering off from what they wanted to do. … They should carefully look at each applicant and see what they're trying to go for and if it doesn't fit with what they want, make suggestions, like for other options. They kind of just dismissed and was like 'we'll wave you through." … So I think it would be good if they took a little more care. "If this is what you're dealing with if you want to keep dealing with other organizations like this, you should try and do this. Even after you finish a project, maybe they could refer you to other grant organizations, and that would be really helpful. It was kind of like

> "Boom, that's the end of this, no talk about any other options." … I've been trying to get different kinds of grants since, and have no idea (K. Peacock, personal interview, June 2009).

While the Jeunes Volontaires grant seeks to assist the transition into the workforce, what Katherine voices here is a need for a larger framework behind granting organizations, such that the services she desires, including referrals to other grant organizations, are possible. Through Chapters 3 and Chapter 4 we have seen the limitations of current policy models, or lack of current policies. The Jeunes Volontaires grant, the QEP, Québec's youth policy, and *Creative Britain: New Talents for A New Economy* all offer possibilities with regards to supporting youth cultural production; however, none of these government-directed policies are adequately broad to fully address contemporary modes of youth engagement with the creative industries; a creative ecology framework is one that may provide the capacity to support small-scale youth creative practices. Chapter 5 and 6 turn to youth initiatives to create their own infrastructure in the face of the lack of relevant structures to speak to their realities, and examines how youth might be registered as active participants within a creative ecology.

Chapter 5:

Beyond Subculture: The Role of Networks in Supporting Youth-led Initiatives

As we have seen in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, youth in the creative industries are impacted by structures and policies that both enable and circumscribe their activities. Chapters 5 and 6 will turn to an examination of the mechanics of the initiatives that youth take up themselves to assist in their navigation and negotiation of the creative industries. To this end, I look at youth-led and youth-involved organizations. "Youth-led" refers to organizations which "maintain 51% or more of the decision-making power in the hands of youth and young adults," while "youth-involved" refers to "organizations which involve youth and young adults to varying degrees in their decision-making processes" (Hamilton, 2006, p.3). This chapter examines youth-led networks and their roles in facilitating youth cultural production.

Defining Networks:

As those working in the fields of youth culture and subculture studies move forward from characterizing youth subcultural activities as necessarily oppositional in nature, the term "network" has been used as a means to capture and discuss grassroots youth activities and the infrastructures of subcultures. Henry Jenkins (2006b) discusses old theoretical models of subcultural innovation and mass media co-optation, and attempts to think of better ways to capture and characterize grassroots activities:

> The old rhetoric of opposition and co-optation assumed a world where consumers had little direct power to shape media content and faced enormous barriers to entry into the marketplace, whereas the new digital

> environment expand the scope and reach of consumer activities. Pierre Lévy describes a world where grassroots communication is not a momentary disruption of the corporate signal, but the routine way the new system operates: 'until now, we have only reappropriated speech in the service of revolutionary moments, crises, cures, exceptional acts of creation. What would normal, calm, established appropriation of speech be like' (p.215).

Jenkins' work and comments above draw on media and media-making in relation to communication and speech, but these remarks are useful for conceptualizing other kinds of youth activities, digital or not. As a concept, networks might be a way to think of "normal," "calm" grassroots activities, and allows for a theorizing of the infrastructural leverage that is needed for these activities to be "normal" and "calm." While networks may be "calm," this normality does not necessarily mean that the activities in question are apolitical. For example, the riot grrrl subculture of the early 1990s involved a subcultural infrastructure that, while initially centered around Olympia, Washington, diffused nationally and internationally. Discussing DIY feminism, Doreen Piano (2003) comments that the use of DIY "as a feminist tool of communication and expression can be seen in the emergence of a polymorphous infrastructure of grrrl-related cottage industries that include the production of not just music, but zines, stickers, crafts, mixed tapes, and alternative menstrual products" (p.254). The diffusion of the riot grrrl out from its origin point and its focus on cultural production can suggest a reevaluation of the traditional underpinnings of "subculture" that, as seen in Chapter 2, early CCCS work characterized as localized and symbolic in nature. In opposition to these types of conceptualizations, Piano comments on the "the political praxis of resistance being woven into low-tech, amateur, hybrid, alternative subcultural feminist networks" (p.254). Similarly, in *Beyond Subculture*, Rupa Huq (2005) introduces new terms that

perform theoretical work "beyond subculture," or terms that are used to denote practices, affiliations, and formations that the term "subculture" is said to not adequately capture. In discussing the feminist formation of riot grrrl, Huq mentions the term "network," as does Piano. This term draws on Deleuze and Guttari's notion of horizontally rooted rhizomes, and is deemed useful to describe riot grrrl's exploration of other forms of expression besides music, such as fanzines, and is also useful to suggest a dispersed geographic base behind a subculture. Indeed, this term may be better able to capture subcultures that are not "spectacular" and are not specifically centered around music, and may also move beyond the connotations of opposition to the mainstream culture that subculture has come to inherit in problematic ways. The youth-led organization Ignite the Americas, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6, defines networks as "groups of individuals or organizations who share information, ideas and resources in order to accomplish individual or shared goals. Networks usually possess a common interest or concern, while maintaining flexible connections amongst their members" (*Policy Primer*, 2008, p.1). This definition of networks moves beyond the politically charged definitions of subculture put forth in the 1970s. While the language above is generic and neutral, Ignite the Americas is not an apolitical organization, as it is interested in establishing infrastructure for youth artist networks to move towards positive social change based in including youth in government decision-making and community building.

Limitations of Network as a Concept and a Tool

The concept of network is not only used by theorists and youth organizations to characterize their own activities. Oakley (2006) comments how this concept has been taken up by the British government in its conceptualization of people's involvement in the creative industries, and she argues that the government's leveraging of this concept does not work towards social inclusion and equity. Oakley states that

> New Labour [creative industries policy] was focused firmly on the creative individual or independent. It accepted that such people were, or at least thought of themselves as being, highly individualistic, anti-authoritarian, and in some cases, anti-corporate. The 'downsizing' of the 1980s had convinced them that the job for life was unattainable and possibly undesirable and that work could be about self-expression, as well as personal enrichment … Not only was New Labour interested in re-designing the role of public services to aid individual empowerment, but it was also keen on encouraging new forms of collaboration. The site of this collaboration had changed, the network rather than the trade union, say (pp.261- 262).

Oakley evaluates the shortcomings of this New Labour policy, as its meritocratic attitude towards "networking" and "collaboration" assumes fair access and participation of all: "traditions of popular culture from music to videogames, the strength of subcultural identity, the informal skills associated with creativity and in some cases the low capital entry that digital technology opened up, all combined to suggest that the growth of a 'creative economy' was one in which everyone could play" (p.262). However, Oakley demonstrates a lack of black and ethnic minority participation in the creative and cultural industries. Despite the rhetoric of access for all, emphasis on "networking" and "collaborating" is exclusive rather than inclusive, as it relies on social networks that people from disadvantaged backgrounds may not have access to. As discussed in Chapter 2, she cites statistics that demonstrate a stark inequality in access to employment in the creative industries:

> Despite the celebrated 'creativity' of the [black and minority ethnic] BME population and the influence of urban black culture on everything from fashion and popular music to everyday speech patterns, the picture in the UK is … bleak. About 4.6 percent of the creative and cultural industry workforce in the UK is from an ethnic minority background (Leadbeater, 2005) compared with 7 percent of the UK labour force as a whole. This is even more disturbing when one considers the concentration of creative industry employment in London, where over a quarter of the labour force is from an ethnic minority background—up to 35 percent in inner London. And the younger age profile of the BME population means that it should make up a relatively higher proportion of the economically active population than a simple per capita comparison with the white population might suggest (p.263).

In addition to the sharp contrast in access to creative industries employment, Oakley's statistics point to a particular problem of access to employment in the creative industries in rural areas that a simple championing of networks won't correct. Similarly, in the Canadian context, the divide between urban and rural areas also suggests a divide in access to networking opportunities that are seen as important for success in the creative industries. In the *Next Generation of Artistic Leaders and Arts Audiences* report, networking was identified as an important tool for artists, but also identified as area of unequal access:

> Networking was described as the ideal way to foster information and resource sharing between arts communities. It also had potential benefits in terms of fostering creative collaborations and cross-disciplinary activities. Many participants, particularly those in urban locations, said they informally network but in an unstructured fashion. Artists and arts professionals from rural and isolated communities struggle to network with other artists outside their immediate worlds, and, as a result, felt they could benefit from more formal networking activities. Some participants drew analogies between the culture of networking in the business world and that of the arts scene and felt there was a strong need to create, foster and maintain more networks for young and emerging arts practitioners in Canada, either online or face-to-face. In particular, participants from rural and isolated communities said they would benefit from more networking and collaborative opportunities with urban artists (DECODE, 2007, pp.22-23).

Because networks are often informal in nature, they can reproduce hegemonic power structures. While youth-led organizations may be on the rise, a simple increase in youth at the helm of organizations may not correct this problem. A report supported by the Laidlaw foundation on the emergence of youth-led work notes that "the current situation does not provide a strong mechanism for youth organizers to connect with each other and access the mentors, partners, training and resources and networks that can enhance their work. Sustained support is needed to ensure ongoing development at the individual, group, and community level in youth organizing work" (*Foundations & Pipelines*, p.2). The challenge of networks, then, is to work towards inclusion and equity rather than assuming that networks can supplant the work of intervening in social exclusion. Nonetheless, networks remain an important area to investigate when chronicling youth activities and the logistics of careers in the creative industries. In the following sections, I chronicle the activities of two artist networks.

A) Local Networks: Indyish.com

1. Background and Overview of Activities

One of the founders of Indyish.com, Risa Dickens, describes Indyish as "a network of independent artists who co-author a website … we do collaborative events together … [it is] a mass of artists, mostly local, musicians, fashion designers, jewellery artists, independent publishers, writers, visual artists, filmmakers" (R. Dickens, personal interview, April 2009). While Indyish.com operates on-line, it is also organizing locally in Montréal around events and collaborations between artists.

Dickens describes the importance of networks in getting her project off the ground: "I harassed a few friends in each [of the above stated] areas, and other people that I knew—[after that] I'm very interested in working through the links in a network. [All of the people that I knew] had huge artist networks … I just started working through those networks." She states that "the idea is not just to use the site to sell the stuff, but to co-author the site, and to want to work together at some point … when we do projects like The Assembly, it's open to wider projects than just the artists who are on the site" (R. Dickens, personal interview, April 2009). Here, Dickens is referring to a Indyish art relay project that took place between February 10th and March 10th 2007. To begin, writers wrote scripts using Celtx.com, a free open-source film and theatre pre-production software. After the writers uploaded their scripts to Celtx, filmmakers downloaded the scripts and put together a short film, and finally musicians added a soundtrack. Indyish continues to host these events, and they grow in scale each year. Using the Celtx software not only allows for ease in the relay process; it also allows for artists from dispersed areas to work together on the same project. In 2008, Indyish put on the Assembly 2.0, and partnered with Montréal's Fringe Festival. The project ran over six weeks with the following schedule (Figure 1):

Figure 1: Assembly Schedule:

May 1-31	Writers working on scripts, upload to Celtx by midnight May 31 (Pacific Time)
June 1-7	Illustrators create 5-10 images for each script
June 1-7	Meanwhile Assembly Team reads and picks scripts
June 7-12	Gifmakers have a week to animate the illustrations

June 11-13	On Monday, actors and directors meet with Indyish at the Fringe to receive their scripts; they have 48 hours to rehearse their play
June 13-15	On Wednesday, actors and directors come back, perform for the bands, meet and are matched up. The groups plus bands have 48 hrs to rehearse together.
June 13-15	Meanwhile gifs uploaded to Celtx by midnight June 12, bands, djs create music in 48 hours
June 15-16	Performance of plays and screening of animations with live soundtracks

(Source: Smith, 2008)

These collaborative and interdisciplinary events are at the heart of what Indyish aims to do. When the site was being launched, Indyish hosted a music-video making contest in which bands donated a song and potential young video makers made a video for the song they were assigned over a 24-hour period. Dickens explains that during the same period "we got factory seconds donated from the local garment area where we were doing all these events, and we gave them to designers who signed up and they made clothes for 24 hours, there was a local design collective who judged, and they were only slightly more established than the young designers who came out for it, so the judging was really more like meeting them, and talking to them—it was a really positive experience for some of the emerging designers. We threw a big event where you could see the art and see the bands and we projected the music videos" (R. Dickens, personal interview, April 2009). Indyish also started hosting a monthly "Mess" in 2007 which Dickens characterizes as a "curated variety show," but "instead of [the performers] being just very different acts, we'll curate them around a theme … we try to bring people together around who would be inspired by a topic" (R. Dickens, personal interview, April 2009). Shows have included musicians, dancers, circus performers, film screenings, comedians, and also academics, authors, and other speakers. The messes have had 8-15 acts each, which

means that at its biggest, the Mess has had 60 different performers and 10 staff, all working on a volunteer basis. Dickens explains that the principle behind the Mess is that "we operate on zero budget and don't do things that can't pay for themselves." As the motivation behind the Mess is not to make a profit (admission is pay-what-you-can), Dickens and the Indyish staff is free to select smaller and fringier acts, which provides opportunities for emerging artists.

These types of events create end products that get showcased, but also produce connections between participants. Dickens speaks of the "loose positive effects" of Indyish, and gives the example that bands who have played together at the Monthly Messes have later gone on tour together. Another positive effect that Dickens notes is that because the Messes are purposefully curated to include different types of performers from different scenes, performers often gain new audiences outside of their usual circle. Dickens also notes that Indyish offers support to emerging artists in other ways. Indyish maintains a web presence and staff "work hard on getting traffic to the site through search engine optimization—technical stuff that helps people get noticed." The site also includes a blog which chronicles local events, and Dickens notes that "artists will get in touch because we've written about them and play a future show or join the network or come to a show" (R. Dickens, personal interview, April 2009).

2. Challenges

While it may be easy to celebrate the creation of collaborative and interdisciplinary events and the support and opportunities that this offers for emerging artists, this work is not without its challenges, beginning with space (R. Dickens, personal interview, April 2009). Dickens states that "trying to find venues

that are the right fit for us is really hard." Not-for-profit community events may sound lovely, but they also require spaces to house them. Beyond this, Dickens notes difficulties with securing long-term funding because a network is neither exactly a business nor a not-for-profit organization:

> We've tried for a couple of grants, but really found the grant process distracting and demoralizing. I just don't feel like grants are targeted at us. We tried and we looked and we always felt like we were doing yoga back bends to fit ourselves into what they wanted. We don't fit ….We run a very strict, tight, little, specific thing. If we're going to grow, it's going to be somehow in that. If feel like there was, 'become a small business' (R. Dickens, personal interview, April 2009).

Here, Dickens addresses the limited models that are available to categorize youth creative practices in the current granting system. Not all youth activities in the creative industries fit with a business model that relies on growth and expansion. Dickens continues:

> If you're going to do anything entrepreneurial at all, you need to register yourself immediately and start paying taxes four times a year and start jumping through what feels like at the time scary scary paperwork hoops, where you're like 'we're not making any money, so how can I … and I'm spending all of my time and I'm working another job to do this … why would I register?' Why does this need to be a business? So they can have a number to track us? I can't take all of that on for something [i.e. incorporating] that doesn't give me anything. Especially for youth projects—we have so many people coming to us, saying 'you've started a cooperative, tell me how I can go about it' … they first thing they want to do is register … you can get obsessed on how to do that starting detail right, and you get on the other side of it and you have no idea. You have to still work every day to figure out what your business is going to be and how it's going to work, and you should get to do that for a couple of years before you're killing your brain trying to file these taxes for money you haven't made (R. Dickens, personal interview, April 2009).

Dickens' characterizes the requirement to officially legitimize youth practices through registering as a small business as not only distracting from the start-up work of getting projects up and running, but also irrelevant to the needs of contemporary

youth as they engage in the creative industries. Her comments point to the need for different policy structures to support youth small-scale practices in the creative industries:

> …some type of other policy that addresses those types of projects, and funds them, and give them grants. Like a start-up project. You can run a start-up project for three years, register for 20 dollars instead of 80 dollars, get a number, if you make over X amount, then you send the thing in and you come and now you start paying taxes, but until then, now you're one of *these other thing*s. Those other things, well, there's special programs for them, especially if you're making it into a job for yourself. If it's just paying you, then you don't need to do all the other [stuff]. If you're going to do the simplest possible thing, that's ok, and we'll help you. Maybe that exists? (R. Dickens, personal interview, April 2009).

Dickens' comments about the difficulties surrounding the expectation to incorporate are echoed by other youth organizers: in the *Foundations & Pipelines* report, one respondent comments: "Could small groups rather than be incorporated or have a trustee, work in an infrastructure – how do these groups have a safe space to try their idea, get charitable dollars, get access to administrative infrastructure, mentoring, capacity building support from someone before they are expected to be a legal entity? Do they even need to become a legal entity?" (p.4). In addition to the difficulty of grappling with legal designations and the need to become a legal entity, Dickens' comments point to a number of needs that are not being filled by current cultural policies that the simple existence of networks cannot correct. First, Dickens points to the difficulty of the grant-application process, especially for those who do not fit into established funding categories. Secondly, Dickens notes the desire for youth to start their own projects and their need for mentorship as they do so, which suggests that current pathways for seeking out information are not adequate. Lastly, Dickens also points to the lack of available and accessible information with her final

remark: "maybe that exists?" While Dickens has navigated available grant channels, and is correct that there is a lack of available funding streams that speak to her organization (see also Amy Johnson's similar experience in Chapter 1), she remains uncertain if there are or are not funding categories that cover "these other things." This points not to Dickens' lack of knowledge, but to a lack of streamlining of relevant information for those seeking out careers in the arts.

Beyond the above-mentioned challenges, Dickens also notes that current models of best practices in the arts are often structured around growth and,

> There's no reward for being intentionally small. Not that I want a pat on the back. For example, we do these art relays, there were 60 people all around the world, passing scripts. We didn't print anything. It was entirely web-based. The company that supported it gave us USBs, so everyone was trading stuff on USBs. There was zero paper trail for this project that lasted two months and had 100s of people involved by the end. There's no backwards environmental 'you didn't create waste.' We biked for the whole project … Everything is set up from the perspective if you're this big and you create this much waste and you reduce it by 10%, congratulations! We never got that big, we didn't make that big mess, we're just trying to do small community things: there should be something more to support it (R. Dickens, personal interview, April 2009).

While Dickens' comments about the challenges she faces in running Indyish emerge out of her unique experience, the areas of difficulty that she mentions are common problems that emerge out of surveys of young people's experiences in the creative industries and of the needs of youth arts organizations that serve youth. The desire to sustain small-scale community-based not-for-profit projects but also make a living has been seen from Katherine Peacock in Chapter 4, from Amy Johnson in Chapter 1, and from Sean Michaels in Chapter 1. Moving towards a creative ecology framework, or a framework that valorizes cultural production not only for its potential economic impact but also for its role in developing and sustaining healthy

communities, would be a way to recognize and register the significance of these small-scale community projects that are not based in a growth or profit-making model.

i. Need for Municipal Support for Youth Spaces

The need for to find suitable spaces to house youth activities that Dickens mentions above is a need that is often mentioned in surveys of youth arts organizations. Rinaldo Walcott (2006) comments on the importance of youth having opportunities to express themselves: "In my view what we need are programs that will allow young people to engage with and make sense of the ways in which they can contribute to the culture of their communities and beyond. Such an approach means providing young people spaces where they can offer a critique of the culture and society and offer up alternatives." The challenge, then, is to create infrastructure that includes physical spaces where this work can take place, and academics such as Walcott discussing this need for physical spaces marks a departure from the emphasis on youth subcultures symbolically "winning" spaces that emerged from early CCCS work, as discussed in Chapter 2. When the Arts Network for Children and Youth produced their *Undervoiced Voices* report, they set out to gather information about what kinds of changes youth arts organizations would like to see in current funding structures, and found that community organizations desire physical infrastructure to facilitate programs with youth. Respondents noted that the programs most frequently requested by youth are those that are arts and culture related, such as music, theatre, and dance, and that these types of activities "require a significant amount of space and that busing the youth to locations outside the neighbourhood doesn't work, as, 'they simply don't show up'" (Hamilton, 2006,

p.17). Thus, one of the strategies that the *Undervoiced Voices* report cites for "improving mechanisms to enhance undervoiced racialized youth participation" (p.24) is that "serious funding consideration must also be given, in collaboration with corporate partners who have appropriate real estate holdings, to developing and improving infrastructure/creative spaces for youth arts programs" (p.28). Though municipal governments are not specifically named here, the development of creative spaces for youth is an area that municipal policy could address. This consideration of physical infrastructure was also targeted to the federal policy level in the Arts Network for Children and Youth in their submission of proposals to the Ministry of Finance for the stimulus budget, entitled *Creative Spaces for Children and Youth*. The first recommendation of this submission is for the creation of a "Creative Spaces Children and Youth Infrastructure Fund," which would require "a beginning investment of $50 million to be used for pilot infrastructure projects in urban, rural, and remote and First Nations communities" (Albright, 2008, p.2). As discussed in Chapter 3, the Canadian government allocated $60 million to cultural infrastructure in Budget 2009, but these funds do not specifically earmark any provisions for spaces for youth. The Arts Network for Children and Youth notes the particular lack of creation of "children and youth creative spaces;" youth-specific spaces that are being created are correctional institutions and mental health facilities. This report elaborates that these creative spaces would include "small neighbourhood art/creative centres"; "multi-disciplinary art/creative centres with artists, equipment, and supplies"; "new green multi-disciplinary facilities where training is included in the construction"; "facilities specifically designed for older youth"; and "facilities in rural, remote, and First Nations communities" (p.5). ANCY sees that the creation of

these types of facilities "will ultimately not be a drain on public funds" as this investment will provide a return through "costs savings to other sectors, job creation, and most importantly, the improved overall health of our children and youth" (p.6).

Beyond this lack of creative spaces for youth, finding spaces to house small-scale cultural activities remains challenging due to licensing and zoning and other municipal issues. In Montréal, local music venue Casa del Popolo, which showcases emerging artists and has "gained a big reputation for bringing in up-and-coming local and international acts over the past nine years" (Fadden, 2009, p.8) had to stop having live concerts in 2008 after city licensers uncovered that Casa del Popolo was having live concerts without the required salle-de-spectacle permit, which is difficult to obtain. After a year of bureaucratic wrangling, Casa del Popolo owner Mauro Pezzente was able to obtain the required permit and has resumed live music at the Casa, but comments "there are so many specific bylaws that are archaic and need to be updated – they could be less general and more specific to the location … Everyone needs to lobby local government to open the city up to being more friendly towards music … You look at other cities and they have so many live music venues. It's 100 percent about the licensing here" (Fadden, 2009, p.8). Beyond these issues of municipal bureaucratic nightmares, small-scale cultural activities also struggle to receive funding and support as established cultural activities have easier access to cultural infrastructure funding. In Montréal, the new Quartier des Spectacles is a designated festival zone in the downtown core which received $120 million in federal, provincial, and municipal funding, as well as additional funding from private corporations:

> As a result, small venues and festivals, which have played their own role in making Montréal an international culture destination, are struggling

> for attention. Compared to the QDS' hundreds of millions of dollars in investment, this year saw just a $90,000 grant given over three years to the city's Association of Small Art and Performance Spaces. Also this year, a new Industry Canada grant was announced for festivals- but only 'marquee' festivals, with attendees of more than fifty thousand and an overnight touring plan, need apply. Just For Laughs and the Jazz Festival have already secured a significant chunk of this funding. Patricia Boushel, a producer at the celebrated Pop Montréal music festival, laments that the city's vision of promoting culture has amounted to supporting 'hyper-funded areas of the arts- for artists who have gotten over their developmental phase,' instead of for the smaller venues and creative forces at work on the edges. 'As far as the city is concerned,' she says, 'the only festivals of value are Just For Laughs, Cirque du Soleil and the Jazz Fest' (Ebbels, 2009, p.47).

A lack of support for developing artists and for the spaces in which they create and showcase their work also means a lack of support for youth and their practices; continuing to fund these "hyper-funded areas of the arts" because they are seen as economically viable and profit-producing means a neglect of community development and sustainability, and a lack of attention to youths' roles within communities.

This lack of support and lack of available spaces also points to shortcomings in municipal cultural policies. Pezzente's foregrounding of licensing issues and Boushel's critique of Montréal's vision of supporting culture above both suggest the need for more youth-directed policies at the municipal level. Since the publication of Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class* in 2002, the city has gained attention as a key locus of economic development, and considerable investments have been made in developing the "creative city," both in the United States and in Canada (see, for example, Gertler, 2004; Bradford, 2004; Donald, Morrow, and Athanasiu, 2003; Gertler, Florida, Gates, and Vinodrai, 2002; Stolarick, Florida, and Musante, 2005.) The Stolarick, Florida, and Musante (2005) report, entitled *Montréal's Capacity for Creative Connectivity: Outlook & Opportunities*, was funded by Culture Montréal, an

independent non-profit organization funded by the Government of Québec, the city of Montréal, the Cré [Conférence Régionale des Élus] of Montréal, and the Cirque du Soleil. In this report, Stolarick, Florida, and Musante praise Montréal as a creative class city, and advocate that "policy makers and business leaders need to learn more about this misunderstood and largely unnoticed [creative] sector of the economy" (p.3). The principal argument in favour of investment of the creative sector is Florida's (2002) argument that a creative milieu attracts talented workers and hence generates economic growth, or that "a city providing an extensive and original cultural life can … attract talented people. The Montréal region is extremely well endowed in this respect, housing as it does a great number of artists, high-quality cultural infrastructure, and diverse cultural organizations" (Stolarick, Florida & Musante, p.8). As discussed in Chapter 2, Florida values "bohemians" in so far as they attract real money; the examples of Montréal's cultural offerings that are cited in the *Montréal's Capacity for Creative Connectivity* report are not "bohemian" in nature: they are Cirque du Soleil and "seeing 200,000 people in the streets for a special event" (p.8). As discussed above, the city of Montréal seems to have taken up these types of large-scale cultural investments with the creation of the Quartier des Spectacles, but the creation of this type of cultural infrastructure does nothing to serve emerging young artists.

While it is important to recognize the constrictions that ineffective municipal policy can have on the development of local grassroots culture, youth also create their own infrastructure to enable this development. Ian Ilavsky, co-founder of Montréal-based independent record label Constellation Records, offers an alternate

vision to Florida's about investment in cultural infrastructure and mechanisms to develop a scene in a city:

> We [Constellation Records] had one band, Godspeed You! Black Emperor, who became—certainly nothing like now seems to come to the top end of indie bands—but that group of people, besides being incredibly politically coherent in the decisions they made faced with opportunities with success also, without even thinking twice, took everything they made, which wasn't even a lot of money, and pumped it back into the local scene. The Casa [del Popolo] and the Sala [Rossa] [two important music venues] exist because Mauro from Godspeed You! Black emperor put the thousands of dollars he may have been making—and this was money that was being split nine ways to begin with—back into getting that space started. The Hotel2Tango, which is one of a number of very good, accessible recording studios in the city, and certainly not the only one, survives because two of the principals in that studio took whatever success they had and with real genuine commitment put it back into the idea of building local infrastructure. One way that Montréal has flourished which might be different than other places … what everybody wanted was to encourage, by example, encourage other people, even in your own town, let alone smaller towns and other places, to build up the same kind of thing. I think that's a huge part of how Montréal has flourished. There's lots of indie labels, people are not trying to become the top of that pyramid, the same goes with venues. There's been a non-hierarchical kind of spirit in this city at least that doesn't get replicated everywhere (Campbell et al., 2009).

Ilavsky's version of the success of Montréal as a city and as a scene that supports emerging talent is dramatically different than Florida's; rather than emphasizing technological innovations and employees in creative sectors, Ilavsky underlines co-operation, small-scale investments, and the importance of key spaces and sites for nurturing a local scene and local development. While Ilavsky and Florida may both foreground the importance of cities themselves in developing culture, the scale and value of cultural production dramatically differs between these two visions, and we need municipal cultural policies that are better able to grapple with the significance of small-scale practices and the importance of physical infrastructure to house these practices so that youth activities can be better supported.

Ilavksy's vision of Montréal is also dramatically different than McRobbie's (2004) vision of current trends in the creative industries that are based out of her research in London. In a survey of how artists attempt to make a living in London, McRobbie found that

> Gone are the kinds of radical and collaborative actions of the past which drew artists closer to marginalized or disadvantaged groups; gone too are artist community initiatives –[artists] are radically disconnected and dislocated from 'community' (2004, p.141).

While it is not my purpose here to celebrate the utopian potential of Montréal and its cultural offerings, this dissertation has registered community-based projects based in this city, including Sean Michaels' M60 film festival and Risa Dickens' Indyish art relays. Compared to London, though, Montréal is a much more low-stakes environment to attempt to make a living as a cultural producer; these lower stakes may mean more opportunities for not-for-profit community-driven projects. McRobbie (2004) further comments that

> The global city becomes strangely drained of life and vitality, it is de-socialized as surely as it is neo-liberalized. Or to put it another way, strong commitment to place and involvement in the neighborhoods of the global city, including 're-territorialization,' are increasingly precluded or made impossible by the speeded-up economy of art working. The city becomes, not a place of living, but a shadowy backdrop for contacts, parties, events and 'possibilities' (p.143).

Again, this description of the "global city" does not match the description of Montréal that has been described above. While McRobbie refers to the global city here, the UK context of government uptake of the creative industries may inform these comments. As seen in Chapter 4, this governmental celebration of the creative industries may actually have negative consequences for independent small-scale grassroots culture, which increasingly becomes contracted out to large corporations that do away with permanent staff. In the Canadian context, the creative industries

still exist somewhat under the radar; while it is unsupported, grassroots cultural production still exists. Rather than the neo-liberal take-up of the creative industries that McRobbie describes above, we need a creative ecology model based in community development that is able to envision spaces for cultural production to take place.

ii. Difficulties with Grant-Writing and Limitations with Funding Streams

Dickens' comments above about the need for space are not the only common thread in challenges that face youth arts organizations. She comments that her experience of applying for grants with a project that does not fit preset funding categories was like doing "yoga back bends to fit ourselves into what they wanted," and there is a wealth of commentary and recommendations concerning improving this process. In the *Next Generation* report, "some participants who work in multidisciplinary practices said they were confused about which funding streams are appropriate for their work" (DECODE, 2007, p.25). To this end, one of the "future directions" that was recommended for arts funders was an awareness of the "multiplicity" of contemporary young artists:

> Increasingly arts funders will need to recognize that arts practitioners are not solely invested in singular aspects of creative practice or sectoral employment. Many participants have multidisciplinary orientations, and work many different types of jobs to support their creative work. This is of particular relevance when discussing categorization of practice, eligibility criteria and assessment of artistic achievement with arts funding bodies (DECODE, 2007, p.8).

Furthermore, the *Undervoiced Voices* report contains a myriad of recommendations about the grant application process. These recommendations do not necessarily address the same concerns about multiplicity in terms of interdisciplinary work; rather, these recommendations address the concern of multiplicity from the

perspective of youth from diverse and minority backgrounds, and suggest that the grant-application process needs to be altered to allow for more equitable distribution of funds to youth from marginalized backgrounds (Figure 2):

Figure 2: Recommendations about the Funding Process in *Undervoiced Voices*:

10	Create a simplified, flexible, streamlined, less daunting application process for applicants, particularly racialized, youth-led and emerging organizations.
11	Establish an adjudication process which would include decision-making power for funders, youth and young adults.
12	Reduce the amount of detail required in grant application, reporting back and evaluation processes. Youth should be involved in determining these processes and critiquing draft application forms.
13	Allow emerging, particularly youth-led organizations to submit applications and reports on video or DVD or even orally, in the context of a site visit by the potential funder.
14	Improve the grant application process by making deadlines staggered and more flexible, especially for emerging organizations.
15	Include food and public transit tokens as allowable expenses particular to marginalized youth oriented funding.
16	Minimize "end-of-fiscal-year insanity" wherein cash-flow-strapped organizations are too often left waiting for cheques to arrive for weeks and even months after grants have been approved, resulting in a dysfunctional cycle of feast and famine.

(Source: Hamilton, 2006, pp.8-9)

With Indyish, we have seen the ways in which arts networks can foster interdisciplinary and collaborative work, but more needs to be done to bolster both the work of these networks as well as this interdisciplinary work itself.

iii. Lack of Available and Accessible Information

Dickens' query of "maybe that exists?" after her articulation of a model to better support artist networks is common to many young artists. In the *Next Generation* report, many participants vocalized confusion about funding streams and available programs. It should be noted that these youth responders were selected to

participate in the study from a "long list of candidates culled from records of grant applicants, community contacts, suggestions from arts organizations, service organizations and schools" (DECODE, 2007, p.10). This would suggest that the young artists who were selected are amongst the most aware and engaged with the infrastructure of funding programs, yet

> Many artists said they are unsure or unaware of many of the services and funding streams that are offered to them. In many cases, artist recommendations for improving existing programs or creating new programs were similar to those already offered by various funders, or by other government funding streams. This was especially true with regards to funding streams for multidisciplinary works, collaborative projects, and those directed specifically at young and emerging artists. Participants were also largely unaware of existing online directories and resources currently available on arts funders' websites. Young and emerging artists said they are at a disadvantage and lacked access to informal information-sharing networks that funders use to disseminate information (DECODE, 2007, p.19).

This lack of knowledge suggests that need for better streamlining and publication of information; currently, there is no "one-stop shop" in terms of directories or resources that offer an overview of all available programs for youth and emerging artists. A related problem to this lack of streamlining that crops up in the *Next Generation* report is that lack of coordination of deadlines between municipal/provincial/federal levels, as there is no cohesion between the various levels of government and their arts programs. The *Next Generation* report recommends "allowing for sufficient space between different deadlines (so that organizations can have enough time to prepare strong applications), or by allowing organizations to apply all at once for different funders using a standard application form" (DECODE, 2007, p.24). Chapter 7 will address this lack of cohesion, and advocate for a national youth policy framework in order to provide cohesion between national, provincial, and municipal policies.

iv. Lack of Support for Small-Scale and Emerging Practices

Dickens' comment above that there is a lack of support for small community-based projects is echoed through various reports. In the *Next Generation* report, many young artists describe that contemporary models of youth cultural production do not follow standard models based in growth and specialization: "many participants believe that the existing arts infrastructure, which emphasizes specialization, linear career development and clear role delineation, is not reflective of their current reality" (DECODE, 2007, p.55). To this end, many arts organizations recommend that different funding streams need to be developed for emerging and established artists, as emerging artists are at a disadvantage due to their different levels of experience with the granting process, but also due to the different pathways of their work: "participants generally agreed that young and emerging arts practitioners represent a distinct community and that arts funders need to do more to understand the attitudes and pressures they face" (DECODE, 2007, p.54). In the *Next Generation* report, many participants voiced concerns about the genre of grant writing, and expressed that they felt that funding may be allocated to those who have the best grant-writing skills, which are skills that many emerging artists do not feel fully confident with. This concern is voiced by young artists, but also by arts organizations, who also feel that funding streams need to be separated for emerging and established arts organizations. The *Undervoiced Voices* report recommends "establish[ing] a funding graduation process, recognizing emerging and established organizations. Three specific funding categories are suggested: a) emerging with one primary service, b) established with one primary service and c) established with

multiple services" (Hamilton, 2006, p.8). This report also recommends establishing small-scale funding: "a program of small grants ($500-$2,000) aimed at individual youth or emerging collectives of youth" (p.10). This desire support for small-scale practices harkens back to Leadbeater and Oakley's suggestion, discussed in Chapter 3, that emerging "Independents" in creative fields need access to small sums or "micro-credit" and the cultural policy needs to work towards "developing an ecology of hundreds of micro-businesses" (1999, p.29). A creative ecology framework that works broadly across policy sectors to support the creative industries through support for community development and youth practices could allow for support for small-scale community practices that are not based in expansion or a growth model, such as the Indyish network. The challenges that Indyish faces illuminate the problems of presenting the value of the arts only through underscoring their economic significance, as not all arts organizations are working towards becoming economically significant, and this is especially true when dealing with youth practices in the creative industries.

B) National Networks: Canadian Youth Arts Network (CYAN)

1. Origins and Aims of CYAN

While Dickens' creation of Indyish stemmed out of an initiative between herself and her partner that she characterizes as "a labour of love," CYAN emerged out an initiative of government funders. CYAN's administrative co-coordinator, Robin Sokoloski, chronicles the history of CYAN as follows:

> Two years ago [in Fall 2006], there was group of funders in Toronto called IRAFF [Intergovernmental Roundtable of Arts Funders and

> Foundations]. The Laidlaw foundation, Canada Council for the Arts, and the City of Toronto came together and created something called ArtReach Toronto. [It was] an arm's length funding group created by the funders – they all came together and thought there should be an arm's length funding body that was kind of created by youth and has a direct two-way response to youth. So it's specifically for art programs for youth groups that are youth-led. [ArtReach] was one project that came out of that group of funders. Then they decided that there needed to be a forum: they started planning Ignite at the Gladstone Hotel [which convened in January 2007]. They decided in order to make this happen they needed a group of youth advisors so it wasn't just done by the funders so there was some youth input into this (R. Sokoloski, personal interview, April 2009).

Sokoloski suggests that one reason behind the emergence of this initiative is the desire on the part of funders to capitalize on the current trends in youth-led initiatives:

> As funders, they receive all these different applications and they see what's going on and how people can make connections and how some of these organizations like Schools Without Borders are actually acting [as funders]. [Schools without Borders] are offering programming; I think it's called Emerge. They offer funding to groups where if they have an idea, they can get a little bit of seed money to do it (R. Sokoloski, personal interview, April 2009).

CYAN emerged out of a close relationship with funders, and Kehinde Bah, one of the coordinators of The Remix Project, describes the beneficial aspects that a close relationship with funders can bring: "Having them [funders] in the room hearing about the idea and hearing about how things are progressing—it puts the onus on them to do the heavy lifting. We said we still need $30,000 [and funders took it upon themselves to pressure each other into giving money]. Face-to-face communication is important. It changes the power balance" (Sokoloski, 2008, p.8). The excitement on the part of funders that Bah addresses may stem out of Sokoloski's suggestion in her interview above about the current trendiness of youth-led projects and funders' desires to be associated with these "trendy" projects. While this current climate of

trendiness may result in more funding for youth arts organizations, and more funding is of course a positive thing, increased funding alone will not foster a youth-focused agenda for government, create cultural policies that are relevant to youth, create opportunities for youth-government partnerships, or allow for youth participation in government decision-making processes. Instead, we need more comprehensive, youth-centered policies.

While the initial impulse behind CYAN may have come from government funders, it has grown past this origin into its own entity. Sokoloski comments:

> Membership has evolved over the years. [When] we first started, we were hand-picked from the funders and that has created a very interesting dynamic. There are still original people who are still working on it, but if anything, it's expanded and grown. What we're trying to do is diversify it with more artistic disciplines so that it's not so urban-arts heavy, because that has been one of our criticisms. So we have people from poets, music, writers, I'm from the Playwrights Guild, so we try to do it that way (R. Sokoloski, personal interview, April 2009).

CYAN is conscious of diversifying the artistic disciplines that are represented in its collective members, and is also conscious of reaching youth from diverse regions of Canada:

> Last September, we decided that to move any further, because we're calling ourselves the *Canadian* Youth Arts Network, we needed to have young voices from all across the country. So we worked with the Laidlaw Foundation and the Ontario Ministry of Culture, the Canada Council, and Heritage to basically put on this day and a half forum at Habourfront. And we had about 25 delegates from across the country under 30 come and speak about what a network could look like. And the other thing we wanted to discuss was youth arts policy and youth and entrepreneurship, so getting them more involved in those types of industries (R. Sokoloski, personal interview, April 2009).

While there are many artist organizations that advocate for and support emerging artists, (see, for example, Société pour la Promotion de la Relève musicale de l'Espace Francophone (SOPREF) in Québec), CYAN is unique in the regards that it

is specifically focused on youth practices from any artistic background, and that it aims to work nationally. As young cultural producers increasingly move between cities and provinces, a national youth advocacy body becomes increasingly important and relevant to contemporary youth needs.

2. Success of CYAN as a Network:

Sokoloski offers several reasons behind the success of CYAN. First, she identifies a need in the areas the CYAN sets out to address:

> I think the reason why we've kept CYAN going as long as we have on a volunteer basis is because we see a need. There needs to be a hub—a place where everyone can connect and right now there isn't. There currently isn't even a youth arts sector. So we were trying to think that through CYAN something like this can evolve. We also believe that there's a gap and we can bridge that gap between funders and youth, because there needs to be more communication going on between those people, and youth and policy makers. So through events like the one that happened at the Gladstone, we were able to bring young people and policy makers into the same room, which is a very unique experience. The third part we would like to have is to also provide resources for young artists through this network. Our long-term goal is to create an interactive web site so we can provide that information in a one-stop shop (R. Sokoloski, personal interview, April 2009).

The success that CYAN has encountered also suggests the tremendous desire for youth to participate in decision-making processes. Robin Sokoloski comments "CYAN's got actually quite a buzz, which is pretty interesting because we don't have many tools to promote ourselves." She notes that she gets

> Constant emails about wanting to be a part [of CYAN]. It's getting to the point where it's getting quite large actually … [people wanting to be involved] is why we created the Town Halls, so we can have an opportunity to have those larger voices, then we found at the Town Halls that a lot of people didn't get a chance to speak, so then we even had focus groups, which we called safe spaces for people to talk, so we had them broken down into art disciplines and ethnicity because they felt safe enough to speak in those venues. We got a lot of information from that (R. Sokoloski, personal interview, April 2009).

Sokoloski comments on the success of CYAN's events, which again suggests youths' desires to participate in the types of community-building and planning activities that CYAN hosts, but also suggests CYAN's ability to use its own internal networks:

> In March 2007 we held a Town Hall and City Hall. We had 4 days to plan it and 200 people showed up, which is pretty amazing. A lot of that has to do with our connections with Manifesto, with Che [Kothari, Executive Director of Manifesto and CYAN collective member]. He has a huge ability to outreach to a lot of people quickly. We had over 200 people come to that, and the point of that was to do mapping of the youth arts sector in Toronto, what people care about in the city, what matters to them, if collaboration is important to them, even if a network like this would be something that they would deem useful. We also work closely with ArtReach and we also want to continue having those Town Hall meetings (R. Sokoloski, personal interview, April 2009).

In CYAN's documents, the diversity in the backgrounds of the collective members is cited as a strength behind its abilities to operate: "CYAN is a collaborative. Although it is currently made up of nine individuals living in Toronto, each member carries out their own youth art initiatives, far exceeding the city limits. CYAN is unique in that it asks no one to take their 'hats' off at the table. This provides the groups with a wealth of resources as demonstrated at the Ignite Youth Arts Forum in 2007" (Sokoloski, 2008, p.4). CYAN's members' backgrounds not only strengthen the network's abilities to operate, CYAN's activities also help its members carry out their individual projects. Sokoloski cites the networking and collaboration that results when youth come together at the events that CYAN holds as another element of CYAN's success:

> Even for myself, during that two days at Harbourfront [Canadian Youth Arts Forum held in September 2008 at the Harbourfront Centre in Toronto], I met so many people, and made so many connections outside of CYAN with my own programs that I'm doing, and I've already started building those relationships and doing programming with them, and that was through CYAN basically. I really feel that other people got the same thing out of that, so I've heard anyways, which is the best thing

> that can come out of these types of things (R. Sokoloski, personal interview, April 2009).

The Youth Arts Forum in Toronto that Sokoloski discusses here was timed to coincide with the Ignite the Americas conference (which will be discussed in Chapter 6), and brought together 30 youth delegates from across the country to discuss the direction forward for CYAN. Over the course of two days, these youth delegates developed a list of policy issues that impact youth artists and the role that CYAN could play to tackle these issues: this list covered the areas of advocacy, professional development, networking, mentorship/resources, and online-information clearinghouse. The group working on the issue of advocacy "expressed its desire for CYAN to become the direct voice of the youth arts sector to various levels of government" (Canadian Youth Arts Network, 2008, p.12). The professional development group "thought that CYAN should organize workshops on topics such as grant writing and how to present a business plan to possible investors" (p.12). Next, the networking group proposed that "CYAN's future would be best secured through the creation of regional organizations that CYAN would help facilitate in its capacity as an umbrella organization" (p.12). The mentor/resource group suggested "creating a mentor database on [CYAN's] website. A registry would be used to help young people in the arts, or those who work with youth, to connect with more established professionals" (p.13). Finally, the online information clearinghouse group "felt that a CYAN-run, arts-based website would assist every delegate. Ideally the website would have a calendar of upcoming events, list due dates for grant applications, and provide links to other relevant organizations and online groups" (p.12). While this list of policy recommendations may seem somewhat commonplace,

this also points to the needs in these areas and the potential role that a national youth network could play to fill the gaps in available information and services.

3. Challenges that CYAN Faces

While CYAN's unique relationship with a funding body enabled its existence and has provided funding for its activities, Sokoloski also cites this relationship as a hurdle that CYAN will have to work through to continue its existence:

> It's been interesting, because I'm a person who usually applies for grants, it's a very unusual relationship. I think that we needed each other to begin, but now that we're becoming our own entity, if that's what we want to do, then we need to pull away from them and work on our own because we need to start applying for grants then we can't continue the relationship that we have because it's not accountable. We've found that as we move away, we are also given more freedom to do what we want to do and it's not as directed by the funders because of course they're the ones who hold the purse strings, and they have their agenda, so we have to abide by those, and we have. It's been such a great learning experience through doing that, but now if we want to become our own thing we have to sever that kind of relationship (R. Sokoloski, personal interview, April 2009).

Here, Sokoloski references the history of CYAN—it began as a youth organization that was assembled by funders—and she also references the need for CYAN to move beyond this origin point and evolve into an organization that is truly youth-led. Beyond this, Sokoloski addresses other challenges that CYAN itself faces, as well as challenges that youth cultural producers face that CYAN would like to address. While one purpose of the Canadian Youth Arts Forum in 2008 was to discuss cultural policy, Sokoloski notes that these discussions are difficult, both because of youths' lack of familiarity with policy terrains, and policy makers' lack of familiarity with youth activities. She cites a "barrier when we start talking about policy and then youth. Like a wall automatically goes up. Everyone's like 'what's policy?' A lot of things that we find policy makers are talking about are things that are already being

done. It's kind of hard to make it tangible for young people." Sokoloski also cites a lack of suitable spaces of youth activities and a lack of available training for youth as areas that CYAN has identified that policy makers could intervene in: "One huge thing is creating physical space, like youth arts buildings that are managed by youth themselves, that is a space for them ... trying to get more training, trying to have funding for youth to become more well trained. Totally vital."

The concerns that Sokoloski mentions are ones that were discussed when CYAN held focus groups after its Town Hall meeting in 2008. Concerning space, the document that was prepared following these focus groups states:

> It's no secret that the youth art sector not only desires, but also requires physical space. It was felt that a central network with regional locations is vital in order to strengthen the youth arts sector. In addition, it was widely understood that a strong sense of legitimacy is gained when energy is collected under one roof. Many of the youth that were invited to participate in the focus groups were between the ages of 19 to 25. Therefore, most of the participants understand this issue first hand, as they are currently out of school and no longer have an institution to house their work. Space that has been made available is normally borrowed. Therefore, you are always working within someone else's limitations (Sokoloski, 2008, p.6).

One solution that was proposed was exchanging and sharing space between youth arts organizations. Kehinde Bah of the Remix Project stated: "A co-operated space would also encourage shared resources. It was stated, 'A lot of time you buy the equipment and do the project and then it just sits there. I think it would be cool to have a centralized spot. Let's say you want to do a photography project, now you don't need to put that in the grant'" (Sokoloski, 2008, p.7). Another proposal that emerged out of these Town Halls meetings was to create a centralized hub of information concerning the arts:

> Youth know that the resources are out there; they just aren't sure how to access them. The resources are scattered and isolated. This has created a

> great deal of frustration amongst the youth arts sector. A solution to this issue was that an umbrella organization provides the youth art sector with the connections, resources and expertise to strengthen the community rather than fragment it. The consensus was that one centralized hub should be created with regional offices (p.7).

Information need not only come from experts; youth also desired forums to share their knowledge with one another: "one of the youth arts networks greatest challenges is informing one another about what it being done. Opportunities need to be designed that allow the network to share their stories. It was felt as though some sort of directory would act as a great resource" (p.8). Concerning the point that Sokoloski raises in her interview above about the need for more training for youth, one discussion at the Town Hall focus groups was about the importance of mentorship: "Mentors need to be sought after in both the business and not-for-profit worlds as some arts workers may not have the business know-how in terms of management practices" (p.8). Above all, the overlap in identified needs that have emerged from the CYAN's Town Halls and National Forum, as well as the needs that Sokoloski and Dickens identify in their interviews, suggests a deep-seated desire for access to adequate and available resources, including space and information.

As we have seen, youth-led artist networks offer unique opportunities for youth to set their own agendas and work towards facilitating youth engagement with the creative industries. However, youth artist networks are not a cure-all to gaps in cultural policies and narrow funding streams, nor are they a magical solution to problems of unequal access to employment in the creative industries. The existence of youth networks demonstrates the ability of youth to create their own initiatives as well as the infrastructure to support their own practices in the creative industries; the existence of youth networks also demonstrates the need for resources and

information-sharing, as this is what networks provide. As much as networks may be mechanisms that help youth navigate their entry into the creative industries, networks also cannot create more relevant cultural policies that enable the existence of small-scale practices. Chapter 6 furthers this discussion of the possibilities and limitations of local and national youth artist networks by looking at international youth artist networks, and examines not only how artist networks set their own agendas, but also partner with governments to address the problem of a lack of relevant cultural policies and narrow funding streams, and work towards a progressive vision of community development that includes youth involvement with the creative industries.

Chapter 6:

Towards a Community-Based Model of Youth Involvement with the Creative Industries: Ignite the Americas and the Remix Project

While Chapters 2 and 3 established that youth involvement with the creative industries may not always register in academic research or in government policies, this lack of presence of youth does not preclude the possibilities of youth-government partnerships that have yet to ever fully materialize. This sort of partnership offers one potential avenue for better supporting youth involvement in the creative industries. Ignite the Americas is a youth-led network that emerged out of the activities of CYAN (Canadian Youth Arts Network), discussed in Chapter 5, and is an initiative that takes up this possibility of youth-government partnerships. In 2007, the Ignite: Youth Arts Forum conference was held in Toronto, which gave birth to CYAN, and in September 2008, I attended and observed the Ignite the Americas conference that was held in Toronto which brought together youth delegates from North, South, and Central America. While the initial Ignite conference in 2007 was Toronto-based and gave rise to the idea of a national youth network, the scope of Ignite the Americas is international in nature, as it operates in conjunction with Inter-American Committee on Culture (CIC) of the Organization of American States (OAS). The overt purpose of the 2008 conference was for the youth delegates to prepare a presentation of recommendations in the areas of toolkits, policy, and networks, at a meeting of Ministers of Culture and authorities of the OAS at the Royal York Hotel on September 19, 2008. This meeting was conceived as only a first step in possibly creating a broader partnership, as the post-

forum report states, "the purpose for coinciding Ignite with the CIC meeting was to lay the foundation for stronger and enduring partnerships between young people and government, so that arts and cultural policy can be better informed by local realities. In concrete terms, the main goal for this meeting was: To explore how young peoples' voices/experience can contribute to decision-making" (Ignite the Americas, 2009, p.4).

This meeting was the first occasion of youth being invited to an OAS meeting, and as such, marked a unique opportunity for youth-government dialogue. Speaking to the youth delegates a few days before their meeting with the OAS, Canadian Governor General Michaëlle Jean commented: "this unprecedented, and dare I say revolutionary, partnership between the OAS and the pan-American youth arts sector is really laying the groundwork for movement that can not only ignite but also shake up the Americas" (Jean, 2009). Jean's comments suggest that this partnership between youth and government already signifies real change in the ways in which governmental organizations conduct their business, and that this partnership will continue to affect change in the world. While Jean's rousing rhetoric suggests that positive social change is not only desired, but has already and will continue to happen, we also need to examine the possibilities and challenges of youth engagement with their governments. If current cultural policies do not reflect current youth realities, can youth themselves create a more youth-centered agenda for government? Can youth agendas be heard by governments? Can youth initiatives be transformed into government policies, and can these policies be put into practice? These questions are ones that Ignite itself is also grappling with, asking policy-related questions in their documents, including "What roles [have] arts and culture …

already played in building community at both a local and national level? What kind of role can Government play in the growth of the culture industry? What should a partnership between government and young people look like?" (Ignite the Americas, 2009, p.12).

Ignite the America's Vision of the Role of the Arts and Other Unique Elements of their Mandate

Ignite the Americas operates on the principle that art is a vehicle for social change and youth engagement. While the organization maintains a heavy focus on youth inclusion, it equally underlines the economic impact of the arts and their contribution to community development, and also makes connections between these two areas of youth inclusion and economic/community development. Their website underscores the "increasingly important role that arts and cultural expressions play as an engine for economic growth," (Ignite the Americas, 2008b) and their conference *Policy Primer* suggests that good governmental policy links economic growth with sustainable community development, and sustainable community development includes youth engagement: "funders should encourage their grantees to understand and articulate how their services/project fits into larger community development goals. They should be challenged to ensure that they are working with various approaches that engage diverse youth populations, particularly those who are marginalized" (Ignite the Americas, 2008a, p.2). For Ignite the Americas, economic growth is always linked with positive social change and youth engagement, as the Ignite the Americas sees economic growth though the arts as a means to combat the violence and crime that many youth face in impoverished areas. Their website states:

"arts and cultural activities can and do significantly contribute to economic growth, the reduction and the prevention of violence by strengthening human potential, generating resilient community ties, augmenting self-esteem, and developing skills in young people that can allow them to secure decent jobs" (Ignite the Americas, 2008b). These links between youth engagement through the arts, economic growth via development of the creative industries, and sustainable communities are consistently found throughout Ignite's documents. Their post-forum document states:

> When young people feel excluded from meaningful opportunities in society, there is a greater risk of them leaving the mainstream for the murkier waters of crime and violence. However, the arts engage young people and combat social exclusion by providing them with a constructive outlet for their frustrations, while also providing a way of transforming those frustrations into positive, tangible and sustainable economic activities. Globally, arts and cultural expression have proven to be effective vehicles in facilitating integral development strategies within our societies aimed at building healthy individuals, communities and economies (Ignite the Americas, 2009, p.3).

Due to the articulation of youth, the arts, economy, and community, Ignite the Americas holds a unique vision of the purpose of the arts and the role that youth have to play within economic development. This vision contrasts with the role of youth that is presently put forth by governments; as we have seen in Chapter 3, emphasis on the importance of youth as cultural producers is lacking from Canadian cultural policies. Moreover, this articulation of youth, arts, economy, and community, may be one example of working towards a creative ecology framework due to the links that are made across these sectors when conceptualizing how to best support creative industry development.

The commitment to youth arts as a viable economic and community model is not the only unique characteristic of Ignite the Americas; they also press for more

statistical research in the field. Another of Ignite the America's key principles is the need for accurate data to demonstrate the social and economic impacts of the arts. Ignite the America's Executive Director, Che Kothari, was invited to speak at a follow-up meeting to the Ignite conference in September 2008 at the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of Cultural Ministers & Highest Appropriate Authorities in Bridgetown, Barbados on November 21, 2008. His summary of the youth delegates' recommendations at the OAS meeting in September included the need for adequate data collection in the arts. He stated:

> Our case for culture becomes infinitely stronger as a unified force; so, these impacts must continue to be mapped, measured and then shared across the Americas. We must build this as a movement. We must also remember to not only focus on the quantitative data, but all of the qualitative impacts that are much harder to measure, but really help tell Culture's story. We must work together on all levels to get this message out to everyone: that culture is a leading solution, which is not being given the attention and support it deserves… we must work together to effectively measure the impact that Culture is having across the Americas by continuing to develop Cultural Information Systems. By doing so, we will be building the extremely needed case for Culture. This information needs to be derived from all levels, from grassroots arts movements to fine arts practices. There is a plethora of examples that I can provide of youth arts organizations that effectively combat violence or that have built their own local cultural industries (Kothari, 2008).

Here, part of making the case for culture is telling the story of youth engagement through the arts. As we have seen from Chapter 3, some academics, as well as the Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA), have pointed to the need for more data collection and mapping of the creative industries; here, this call is extended by Kothari in order to collect relevant data that charts youth engagement with the creative industries. After the CCA director Alain Pineau held national forums in which he consulted the public about how to best make the case for culture, the CCA published a report stating

> Everywhere, people agreed that there is a need for more data and analysis concerning the arts and culture sector. There is currently a certain quantity of research done by various government agencies, administrative tribunals, universities and by some arts service organizations. Most of the time this work is done to satisfy punctual requirements. However, hardly any of this research is done in a coordinated fashion and it is almost impossible to know what is available. Even more importantly, years of successive budget cuts at Statistics Canada have meant that less and less fundamental data is made available to the sector to present fact-based arguments in its attempts to make its case to the various levels of government (Canadian Conference of the Arts, 2009, p.11).

When the CCA calls for the need for more adequate data collection in order to make the case for culture and develop a "national cultural advocacy strategy," it does not foreground the role of youth in making this case; conversely, Ignite the Americas always underlines the role of youth when making the case for culture.

Another unique aspect of Ignite the America's mandate is its desire to have youth involved in decision-making processes that affect them, and the organization works towards putting this desire into practice with its partnership with the OAS. This desire is often voiced by youth organizations, but Ignite the Americas provides a tangible possibility that this desire could become a reality. In many cases, there is a desire for youth to participate in funding juries' decision-making processes. In the *Next Generation* Study, participants voiced that "arts funders should create a separate system or pool for first-time applicants. First-time applicants should be assessed by a jury of emerging artists" (DECODE, 2007, p.68). This desire is also voiced in the *Undervoiced Voices* study of youth arts organizations. The recommendations include to "establish an adjudication process which would include decision-making power for funders, youth and young adults" (Hamilton, 2006, p.8) and to "improve the structure and effectiveness of the individual and collective funding bodies by

amplifying diverse, racialized youth voices in decision-making contexts such as juries and boards of directors" (p.10). Ignite the Americas goes past the desire for youth inclusion in funding decisions; the organization hopes that youth will be involved in shaping the direction of cultural policies through their involvement in decision-making of this sort.

During the conference in September 2008, the youth delegates discussed that the recommendations they were putting forth required a shift in the way art is sometimes conceptualized, and many attendees stated that a model of preaching "art for art's sake" must be broadened in favour of a model of art as a vehicle for social change. They desired that the OAS validate and dignify the important and transformative role of art in society. They also desired that the Ministers of Culture from their respective countries open channels of communication with youth, and involve youth in decision-making processes. Delegates stated that youth are too often seen as the source of social problems, when in fact, if they were asked to work with governments, they could be part of the solution. Ignite the Americas suggests that change needs to happen so that these goals can be reached, not only with a redefinition of art's role in society, but also with what is included in governments' definitions of art. One of their preparatory materials for their youth delegates, the *Policy Primer*, states that "there is a need for governments to recognize various non-traditional forms of arts" (Ignite the Americas, 2008a, p.4), citing examples of "street art forms" and "amateur arts."

The recommendations that youth made were informed by their engagement with the arts, both as practitioners and as organizers. For example, Choc'late Allen, the youth delegate from Trinidad and Tobago, and the youngest youth delegate to

Ignite the Americas at the age of 15, is both a reggae recording artist and an activist, and works to integrate art more fully into curricula in Caribbean nations. Allen works with Caribbean Vizion, a group of young artists and educators that use performing arts to sensitize youth about issues such as teen pregnancy and drugs: work that has been officially endorsed by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) secretariat, UNESCO and UNICEF as well as many regional heads of governments. Many of the youth delegates at Ignite do similar kinds of work, and in a debriefing session the day after the meeting with the CIC was held, many youth delegates vocalized that the most powerful thing that they took away from the conference was the contacts that they had made with like-minded people across the Americas who do work that is similar to their own. Many delegates voiced a strong desire to maintain the contacts and network that they had formed during the conference to be able to share struggles and best practices.

Summary of Ignite the America's Recommendations and Proposals

During the week-long conference, Ignite the America's youth delegates produced a series of recommendations that were presented at the OAS meetings, and later published in the post-forum report. In area of toolkits, youth desired templates for starting a small enterprise or community initiative, for finding funding and finances, for communicating and working with governments, and for general mentorship and guidance. They also desired toolkits that included a central funding calendar and case studies and stories that share successes and challenges. In the area of networks, the delegates sought the development of a Pan-American Youth Arts

Network that would "advocate for youth arts across the hemisphere; serve as a forum for exchanging best-practices and promoting inter-cultural dialogue; [and] improve/sustain government and NGP relations" (Ignite the Americas, 2009, p.7). Delegates desired that this network would have regular face-to-face meetings, an interactive website/portal, a quarterly magazine to ensure access to information for those, especially in rural areas, who don't have Internet access, and also desired radio/television/web broadcasts. In the area of policy recommendations, the youth delegates made proposals in five main areas: "incorporate the voice of youth in governmental decision-making processes; encourage evaluation and demonstrating value of arts & culture through promising programs; strengthen arts education; build capacity & develop and share resources; support ongoing local, regional, national, and hemispheric meetings for practitioners and practitioners + governments" (pp.12-13). While Ignite the Americas may seem unique in its conception and vision, none of these recommendations are radical in nature: the commonplace nature of these recommendations points both to the lack of and need for infrastructure for youth in the creative industries. The types of recommendations around the need for increased infrastructure to support youth cultural production and greater youth involvement in decision-making processes have also been made by youth artist networks, as discussed in Chapter 5.

Ignite the Americas: Conference Proceedings

After a week of discussion and preparations, three working groups (networks, policy, and toolkits) each made a set of recommendations to present at

the OAS meeting, and choose one male and one female group member to present these proposals. The presentation themselves went smoothly, but many youth delegates later voiced disappointment with the lack of response that they received from the OAS delegates who were present. This lack of response seemed to suggest a gap between the official invitation to be present, and the actual reception of the youth, and may also suggest that the "revolutionary" change that Michaëlle Jean spoke of in her address to the youth delegates has not yet materialized. Youth delegates were seated with the OAS delegates from their countries, but only about half of the OAS delegates attended the meeting, as this meeting was a preparatory meeting for a ministerial meeting in November 2008 in Barbados. Many youth felt that their proposals had a lukewarm reception, and wanted more dialogue with the ministers present. Generally, those ministers who did speak said that the proposals made were good ones, but youth delegates commented that they didn't want to be congratulated on their efforts; they wanted more feedback and engagement with their ideas. Several ministers commented that the youths' proposals were valid for all artists, not just youth artists. While these comments were delivered in encouraging tones, they also disparage the specific challenges that youth face in the creative industries that the youth delegates were attempting to address. These comments may also suggest the challenge of getting a youth-specific agenda written into policy, as the ministers' comments suggested a broadening-out of recommendations such that they were applicable to all artists. Some ministers also commented that policies and tools that the youth were recommending already exist in some countries, but this comment ignores the youths' recommendation that there be databases that compile

existing programs and best practices across the Americas, such that youth can be aware of these existing structures.

During the meeting, a discussion emerged about funding, as some OAS delegates stated that the youth delegates' proposals required funding that governments either didn't have or that would take time to procure. Some youth delegates chafed at this suggestion, commenting that governments have money for war, but not for art. One delegate commented on the August 2008 cuts to Canadian art programs (PromArt and Trade Routes), and commented that these cuts send a negative message to developing nations where there are still struggles to have the importance of arts education understood. According to Anna Upchurch (2007), Canada has indeed played a leading role in commitment to cultural policy:

> In the international field of cultural policy, Canada has often assumed a leadership role in the decades since the Canada Council was established. It was a charter member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) when that body was established in 1946, and it has consistently taken an activist position in definitional debates and trade issues around cultural diversity. The Canada Council organized the first world summit of arts councils in December 2000, with its major objective 'to lay the groundwork for an effective and sustainable global network of national arts councils and arts funding bodies'; the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) evolved from this summit (p.239).

With Canada's cuts to its arts programs, delegates were unsure if Canada actually retained this leadership role.

The OAS delegate from the United States asked the youth what could be immediately done by the OAS to support youth practices that doesn't require funding. Answers to this included greater youth involvement in planning processes, greater recognition of freedom of expression (i.e. a recognition that graffiti is a form of artistic expression, not a crime), greater involvement of experienced artists in

running programs for youth, greater recognition of arts as a vehicle for social change, and greater recognition of the arts in the education system (i.e. the Jamaican delegate desired a public performing arts high school, and a public museum of reggae). There was also a desire for the Ignite delegates to be formally recognized as youth ambassadors for culture. The post-forum document that Ignite produced underlined the commitment that the organization has to pursuing partnerships between youth and governments:

> The root problems we face are profound: feelings of social exclusion and isolation; lack of meaningful chances for personal, social and economic growth; as well as lack of access to resources and opportunities. As members of the Youth Arts sector, we know through first-hand experiences that many innovative solutions to these complex problems lie within the positive channeling youth energies and vision. However there are still missing pieces. There is a real need for young people, community leaders, governments and stakeholders to come together and find a common ground to channel our collective strengths, experiences and abilities so that an effective trans-sectoral partnership can emerge to build healthy communities and resilient creative economies (Ignite the Americas, 2009, p.3).

At the meeting itself, these desires were neither accepted nor rejected, as they did not get any direct response. Although the Ignite the Americas was intended to be a partnership between youth-led initiatives and governments, some delegates felt wary of working with governments altogether, later stating in a debriefing session that the governments want to keep people under control, not create change. Some youth delegates felt that their efforts should be directed towards mobilizing citizens instead of governments. The challenges of youth-government partnerships may not only emerge from resistance on the part of government, but may also emerge from reluctance to engage on the part of youth, or inability/lack of desire to use rhetoric and strategies that are government-friendly (i.e. refraining from critiquing governments' engagement in war when requesting funding).

Ignite the Americas: The Aftermath and the Complexities of Power and Privilege

In a debriefing session the day following the meeting, many delegates stated that during their week in Toronto, they felt too bogged down with working on the recommendations to bring to the OAS meeting, and did not have enough time to share their experiences with one another. Delegates were asked to bring examples of their cultural production or community involvement in the arts with them, but there were no opportunities to share these works with one another. Due to the short time period in which the conference was organized, pre-conference communication was limited, and some delegates were unaware of the purpose behind travelling to Toronto, and would have liked preparatory materials before they arrived. Some delegates stated that the rigid schedules that they had to follow and output they had to produce were at odds with their cultural backgrounds and desired more informally structured time to connect with one another. There was also some miscommunication and confusion about industry leaders who were brought in—successful young people who work in the creative industries—and who were given cars, twice the per diems than the youth delegates, and were lodged in a nicer hotel (many delegates voiced concerns over the cleanliness of the hostel they were lodged in). The role of these industry leaders—experts to consult—was not made transparent, and some youth delegates questioned that an industry leader was chosen as one of the representatives to make a presentation at the OAS meeting: the youth delegates did not know that this industry leader was not in fact one of them. Many

delegates voiced these concerns not only in terms of organizational problems, but also voiced them in post-colonial critiques of power and voice. Due to the pre-determined task at hand of putting together a set of recommendations for a meeting, the Ignite the Americas conference organizing team hired a professional facilitation company to send a group of facilitators to work with the delegates. While many delegates vocalized satisfaction with their overall experience, including that with the facilitators, many delegates also voiced critiques of the facilitation process. One delegate stated that she resented being told by facilitators that she didn't understand the themes that were meant to be discussed. Another stated that he felt as if he was being asked to paint inside the lines that someone else created. He stated that felt that a colonial mindset was in evidence through the facilitation process, and commented on the symbolism of inviting in four White people as facilitators when the delegates where predominantly Black and Hispanic. After this discussion, one of the conference coordinators commented on the complexities of power and privilege and asked everyone to continue to be aware of this, and to continue asking questions about this. Many delegates also voiced that they found the whole experience to be empowering due to the opportunities to meet with government officials and voice their concerns. Even after this dissatisfaction with the facilitators was voiced, the facilitators returned to do a final closing activity. Delegates were asked to write down their goals and commitments for the following two weeks, two months, and two years concerning how they would carry on with their work at the conference in their home countries. There was some opposition to working with pens and paper, and some youth wanted to talk about their commitments instead of writing them on paper. The activity proceeded anyways, and people wrote down their commitments

to be kept on file. This final activity of the official proceedings of the conference shows a disconnect between the official purpose of the organization to be a youth-led initiative that works with government, and the reality of being required to complete an activity by an outside body. These issues around power and voice represent another layer of challenges when working towards youth-government partnerships.

Other Models of Youth Arts: (1) Art as Job Readiness

While the Ignite conference may not have ended on note of overwhelming success, the group will continue to attend OAS meetings, and the potential for effective youth-government partnerships remains. Certainly, Ignite's unique vision of the role of the arts is one to retain. Other organizations make connections between youth arts and employment, but Ignite offers a more holistic vision that is rooted in community development through youth participation in the creative industries. Conversely, the Grassroots Youth Collaborative (GYC's) study, *Youth on Youth*, surveyed youth-led organizations operating out of Toronto about struggles and best practices. Here, we do find some evidence of links between youth activities and economic development, but these links are more limited in their conception. In this study, some coordinators mentioned the idea of youth arts organizations moving to a model of "social entrepreneurialism" instead of strictly relying on grants in order to operate:

> Another advantage of crossing over into what Gavin [Sheppard] and Derek [Jancar] [coordinators of IC Visions] describe as 'social entrepreneurialism' is because the job creation and tangible economic improvements such ventures can bring about in the lives of

> marginalized youth. As Gavin explained: 'The reason why I'm excited by these profit-driven streams is not only because it is self-sustaining…but because youth involved can start to earn money as well…We can start to bring them in as event coordinators and other people as street team…and we are starting to do job creation which is a huge thing…I mean the opportunity to change people's economic [state] and also give them valuable life experiences that they can take to other professions' (Warner, 2005, p.20)

Warner (2005) also gives an overview of the ways in which Regent Park Focus has been also to able create employment opportunities for youth involved in their creative projects:

> Regent Park Focus was also able to generate income for its service users by hiring out its video services for other organizations. [The Regent Park Focus program co-coordinator comments] 'CUPE hired us to do a video for them. So we have a CD program where an organization can hire our young people and then we hire young people on a contract basis to produce videos for other people' (Warner, 2005, p.20).

Here, we do find a connection between youth activities and economic opportunities, but this not an explicit part of Regent Park Focus's vision. Their website states:

> Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Center is a youth driven, not-for-profit organization located in the heart of Regent Park, Toronto. Regent Park Focus is motivated by the belief that community-based media can play a vital role in building and sustaining healthy communities and seeks to increase civic engagement and effect positive change through youth-led media productions (Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre, 2009).

Here, there are links between youth arts and community development, but this vision is more limited than Ignite the America's broader art as community/economic/social change mandate.

Elsewhere in the *Youth on Youth* study, the economic potential of youth arts is questioned by those working in the field. One interviewee, commenting on youth arts, states:

> I think that it's really popular and it's using popular culture to attract youth….I guess what is a concern to me however is that the Caribbean

> background youth aren't [going into] other career skills development programs…They are getting involved in music production and DJ-ing, anything around music…and I think the music industry has targeted [Black] youth as well [i.e. by reproducing the Blacks as entertainers and entertainers only stereotype]. That's what concerns me about that (Warner, 2005, p.28).

Here, the arts as economic model is portrayed as potentially limiting for Black youth, but this view perhaps does not see skills in cultural production as viable long-term employment skills. This bifurcation of cultural production from viable skills is echoed elsewhere in the *Youth on Youth* study. One interviewee comments: "We teach them more life skills and experiences and dealing with business situations and dealing with people and overall communication skills and leadership skills. That's more important than them becoming a better rapper because the chances of being a rapper is slim" (Warner, 2005, p.33). The implication here is communication skills and leadership skills are transferrable skills that can be taken to a different industry or line of work. This view does not take into consideration the "life skills" learnt in the process of learning to become a "better rapper" might also include acquiring skills that are necessary to navigate the mechanisms of employment in the creative industries themselves.

Other possible limitations of the connection between the arts and employment are raised in the *Youth on Youth* study: this study cites a disconnect between arts and viable careers on the part of the parents of the youth who attend youth arts programs:

> One difficulty faced by organisations deploying the arts as a medium of youth engagement concerned the devaluation of art as a worthwhile activity, based primarily on its perceived inability to in any way further the career potential and/or marketable skills of youth. Parents and youth 'don't think of the arts as a way to continue their schooling', Adonis Huggins, Program Co-coordinator at Regent Park Focus for instance contended of the challenges of using arts as a youth

> engagement tool. Staff working in communities with high concentrations of immigrant and/or working class youth also spoke of the tendency of immigrant/working-class parents to prioritize and support more traditional educational forms of programming with seemingly more fungible skills transfer, over the arts, which was sometimes perceived as a luxury ill afforded to those already facing systemic barriers to full entry into the Canadian workforce (Warner, 2005, p.33).

In the report, a rejoinder that is made to these criticisms is that art programs do facilitate entry into the workforce through fostering social skills that are integral to job readiness. The arts are seen to teach "tangible and intangible career and life skills" (p.33). A focus on the arts is valued for its "indirect" benefits, as one coordinator comments that the arts are "an opportunity to gain life skills, like problem solving, working together, creativity, decision-making…employment, setting goals" (p.33).

This "arts as job readiness" (rather than employment in itself) is often found in youth arts organizations. For example, in the spring and summer of 2008, I worked with a community arts program called Caméra Côte-des-Neiges. Through funding from Service Canada, this program was able to pay eight at-risk youth to attend a media production program over the course of six months. While these youth were being trained in film production, the end goal of the program was not to lead youth into careers in film; rather, the end goal of this program was to redirect these at-risk youth to school or the workforce (in a general sense). Some of the skills being targeted were ones that are often seen to give value to arts programs; these programs "foster social skills including co-operative work, negotiation, conflict resolution and tolerance for difference, individual responsibility, perseverance, self-management, and integrity" (Fix & Sivak, 2007, p.146), and these skills are seen as useful employment skills. That art programs can develop social and employment skills is

echoed in the press release of Caméra Côte-des-Neiges' closing party and screening of the films that the youth produced. The press release describes the program as "6 mois d'apprentissages et d'expériences variées qui ont permis aux participants de développer leur créativité ainsi que leur sens des responsabilités et du travail d'équipe" (Catellier, 2008). During the course of the six months that Caméra Côte-des-Neiges ran, various levels of commitment to the program were witnessed amongst the youth; the advisory committee that I was a part of discussed that those youth who inserted themselves wholeheartedly into the program where the ones who had long-term goals of working in the creative industries as filmmakers, scriptwriters, or photographers. While the program may have been structured around general job readiness (and as such, emphasized generic job skills such as team work), some youth came to this program while specific career goals. This program taught media production skills, but it did not teach how to seek out a career in the creative industries, which is what some youth may have been looking for. To this end, many arts organizations may make some link between arts and employment, but these links are often indirect, and do not foreground the potentials of youth to work in the creative industries.

Other Models of Youth Arts: (2) Youth Engagement

The model of the arts that sees the arts as a mechanism to foster job readiness can be connected to a larger model of the arts that sees the arts as a mechanism to foster social cohesion. At a time when the arts are often undervalued as a funding priority by governments, one of the ways in which the Creative City

Network is "making the case for culture" is through an argument about the personal and social development of children and youth. In this argument, psychological as well as vocational perspectives are emphasized, as one of the key points is that "the arts help in the successful transition to adulthood and the development of in-demand job skills" (2007, p.2). As we have seen, these in-demand job skills are not necessarily skills of artistic production; rather, they are more generic work-related skills like the ability "to complete tasks" (p.6) and "teamwork skills" (p.7). This combination of psychological and vocational benefits of the arts can be found in youth engagement models, which also look at the potential of the arts to remediate harmful behavior in at-risk youth. These models have a longer history of implementation in the UK and the US than in Canada but this model is also starting gain momentum in Canada, and Fix and Sivak (2007) note that

> The engagement of Canadian youth, particularly the most marginalized youth, has become a pressing public policy issue in Canada in recent years. Incidents such as the rise in gun and gang violence in Toronto's 'Summer of the Gun' in 2005, the June 2006 arrests of 17 Toronto area youth on terrorism-related charges, and the spike in Aboriginal youth suicides in Kascechewan in early 2007 have drawn media and public attention to the deep disengagement experienced by some segments of the Ontario youth population (p.145).

Art is seen as tool to reduce crime in the youth engagement model, but is also viewed as promoting social cohesion in a more holistic manner: "research shows the enormous benefits to the health and wellbeing of children and youth when they have access to arts and creative activities. The results show increased learning and community involvement, a reduction in crime and high school drop-out rates, reduced psycho-social behavior and improved health and social skills" (Albright, 2008, p.2). The reasoning behind the success of art and creative activities in improving social cohesion is that the arts are "asset-based programs" that "focus on

what children and youth do well" (p.3). One UK study cites that the arts are an effective way to foster social cohesion with youth because they "offer a non-traditional, non-institutional, social and emotional environment; a non-judgmental and un-authoritarian model of engagement; and an opportunity to participate in a creative process that involves both structure and freedom. At the same time engagement in the participatory arts requires respect, responsibility, co-operation and collaboration" (Hughes, 2005, p.11).

While the youth engagement model is sometimes defined as an asset-based model to improve social cohesion, youth participation and citizenship, it is often used as a deficit-based model to target so-called "at risk" youth. Zemans and Coles (forthcoming) note

> The youth policies that exist in various departments and jurisdictions, including justice/crime prevention/correctional services, employment/job training, community revitalization/development, education, health, and culture adopt the language of youth *problems* and *problem* youth. Federal support for youth arts programs is as likely to be from the National Crime Prevention Centre, Justice Canada or Corrections Canada as it is to be from the Department of Canadian Heritage (p.1).

Indeed, as the arts as youth engagement model starts to pick up steam in Canada, the Canadian Department of Justice has begun to act as funder of youth arts programs; this has particular shortcomings when considering youths' desires to make careers in the arts. Coles (2007) notes that

> The Department of Justice held the Arts and Recreation Sector Round Table discussions as part of the Youth Justice Renewal Initiative. The discussions emphasized the contribution that youth arts programming makes in establishing positive peer and mentor networks, and how participating in an optional youth arts program encourages and reinforces youth to make positive choices as autonomous individuals (p.2).

These Youth Justice Renewal Initiative discussions also emphasized the role of the arts and recreation in crime prevention, noting that youth arts involves "the opening of pathways for kids to make a contribution (they can teach, coach, make pocket money…)" (Department of Justice Canada, 1999). The reference to "pocket money" makes some connection between youth engagement, involvement with the arts and employment, but the reference to "pocket money" suggests that the Department of Justice does not see youth arts as a pathway to long-term employment. However, Coles refers to the success of the Fresh Arts program that ran in Toronto in the early 1990s: this youth arts program ran under the rubric of youth engagement, but has also been credited with "significantly influenc[ing] the course of Toronto's urban-music industry. A short list of its alumni includes rapper Kardinal Offishall, singer Jully Black, dub poet d'bi.young.anitafrika, music video director Lil'X, hip hop producer Saukrates and Flow 93.5 radio hosts Mark Strong and J Wyze" (McNamara, 2007). Kardinal Offishall credits the program with bolstering his career as a performing artist: "I learned how to make music in the Fresh Arts program…all of the things artists might have to pay a lot of money to do, we learned to be self-sufficient and how to be independent and…that is how my whole career got started at a major level" (Warner, 2006, p.17). This connection between youth engagement through youth arts programming and viable long-term employment in the creative industries is not foregrounded in the youth engagement model; art is more often seen as a remedy for troubled or at-risk youth rather than as intrinsically valuable for all youth. As noted above, this is why the Department of Justice is a key funder of youth arts programming in Canada. This may enable many programs that foster skills necessary for employment in the creative industries to exist, but as noted below in

the discussion of the Remix Project, this also creates problems for viable long-term funding beyond the initial pilot project phase. In general, the Department of Justice funds these types of projects because growing evidence suggests that funding youth crime prevention is a cost-effective strategy. For example, Robin Wright, Lindsay John, and Julia Sheel conducted a Department of Justice-funded feasibility study in 2005 to determine if an outcome-based study of "community-based arts programs [could work] as a strategy to improve the psychosocial functioning of youth in conflict with the law and prevent recidivism" would be worthwhile. This "feasibility study" prior to the "outcome study" was conducted because arts programming with at-risk youth is "cost-intensive" (Wright, John & Sheel, 2005, p.4). Nevertheless, this cost-intensive strategy is also seen as a cost-reduction strategy, due to high costs of maintaining the justice system. Citing Loeber and Farrington (2000), Wright, John and Sheel notes that "youth who engage in delinquent acts are two to three times more likely than other youth to become chronic offenders as adults. In 2002, the federal government of Canada estimated the actual cost of crime—including the cost of private security, insurance, and impact on victims—is about $46 billion a year" (p.7). While the actual costs of "cost-intensive" youth arts programming are not listed in Wright's feasibility study, we can presume that a few video cameras and art lessons add up to less public spending in the long-term.

When this instrumentalist criminal justice-oriented approach gets applied to youth programming, training in cultural production becomes a vehicle for improvement in self-esteem and pro-social behaviour rather than a potential career skill. This becomes a problem when youths' intentions behind coming to these youth arts programs are ignored. In Wright, John and Sheel's *Edmonton Arts & Youth*

Feasibility Study, she notes that "youth were interested in media and in anything to do with making their own music videos, filming, singing, hip hop/breakdance – all activities directly part of their own youth culture. Youth expressed interest in making careers in these fields" (2005, p.11). Youth do not come to youth arts program seeking to be socially integrated, and careers in the fields stated above require more than training the skills of artistic production; the logistical aspects of creating a living from these activities could also be targeted, but these types of considerations are not currently under the purview of the youth engagement through youth arts model. However, training in the "business of art" is often cited in studies of youth needs the creative industries. The *Next Generation* study found that "small business expertise was considered a key need for emerging artists and participants. Most wanted to see more support for the development of these skills among young and emerging artists" (DECODE, 2007, p.6).

Other Models of Youth Arts: (3) Youth Voice

The model of youth engagement through the arts also sometimes focuses on the psychological/individual development aspects of the arts. In this model, terms like "voice" and "empowerment" are often seen, and this model of youth arts as promoting youth voice is the one that those interviewed in the *Youth on Youth* study most readily espouse. The rhetoric of self-expression and voice is evident in Adonis Huggins' remarks:

> 'Media is an outlet that is different because a lot of youth don't have outlets where you can express how you feel and have people actually listen to you. So when you are on the radio or on video you just feel more important.' Adonis Huggins further discussed the potential of

> media arts to act as an educational tool and advocacy medium, amplifying the voice and concerns of those rarely heard, whilst doing so in a fun and life-skill building way. 'We try to encourage this through the video and radio show, to identify issues that relate to youth. We hope that they are making videos about real issues that they are facing in their lives' (Warner, 2005, p.32).

The positioning of the arts as a means of self-expression and youth voice is not unique to the responders of the *Youth on Youth* survey; this model of the role of the arts in youths' lives is a predominant one, which is why Ignite the America's model of the arts as social/community/economic change stands out. In many community youth arts organizations, the foreseen end result of their programs is that youth will have gained opportunities to express themselves. This fetish of youth voice may not fully grapple with youths' purposes behind attending these community arts programs, as many youth are actually seeking out channels to make careers for themselves in the arts rather than channels of self-expression. Low (2008) chronicles that "giving voice" through media production has been seen as a mode of empowering youth:

> Hopes of 'giving voice' to the disempowered have also long driven documentary film production more generally. Recent decades have seen this commitment take the form of increasingly participatory structures in which filmmakers give cameras to those who have traditionally been objects of others' representation and interpretation. Much of this work takes place within community-based media programs in which the education and empowerment of the filmmakers-in-training is the foremost objective (pp.45-46).

Low problematizes the vision that the access to the tools of media production automatically equates with youth empowerment as this "vision glosses over the intricate politics of representation, of speaking and of listening, which inevitably shape all forms of cultural production and reception" (p.46).

Beyond the problematical assumptions behind the youth voice and youth engagement models of youth involvement with the arts, these models may also limit

the possibilities of youth arts and may not fully grapple with youths' purposes behind their involvement with youth arts programs. Fix and Sivak (2007) cite "integration" as a "key challenge" confronting policy makers working with culture as a tool of youth engagement, and they cite the need for "better coordination across jurisdictions of policy, programs and planning so that a value chain of youth engagement, from crime prevention to civic engagement to employment, can be conceptualized and implemented" (p.150). This last piece, employment, may be tacitly understood in youth engagement models, but the connections between using culture as a tool of civic engagement, which may mean employment, and which may mean cultural employment, are often not made in this model.

Other Programs that Model Youth Arts as Careers in Creative Industries: The Remix Project

Ignite the Americas is unique in that connections between youth engagement and creative industries employment are made in their mandate, but they are not the only program that makes these links. For example, the Remix Project in Toronto is a program that is based around assisting youth to enter into careers in the creative industries: "The Remix Project is a youth program that acts as an arts and cultural incubator in Toronto, Canada, North America's cultural capital. Young people aspiring to start careers in the urban arts sector drive the program by developing personal six month plans for success" (The Remix Project, 2009). In its description of its history on its website, Remix explains the importance of hip hop in the origins of The Remix Project:

> Carry on tradition. From its roots in the South Bronx, hip hop is a movement driven by community, passed down from generation to

> generation. Our intent is no different. Started in the fall of 2006, The Remix Project is a program designed to help youth develop their careers in the hip hop/urban culture industry. We draw on the support of Toronto's own cultural industries and institutions, to provide them with all of the knowledge they need to be successful (The Remix Project, 2009).

While hip hop is described here as a integral part of The Remix Project, hip hop is also described as a means of enticing youth by one of its coordinators, Kehinde Bah: "The way we're using hip hop is driven by the young people we want to work with … Hip hop is the hook. It gets us on their radar" (Fatah, 2009). It is interesting that Remix uses hip hop as the hook to teach cultural production skills, as many community arts programs use cultural production as the "hook" to teach job readiness. It is also important to consider that while hip hop maintains a heavy presence in Toronto, it may not necessarily be a catch-all genre that can actually act as a hook for all youth. Robin Sokoloski of CYAN comments: "I was kind of eye-opening for me when I was at the Harbourfront and I was talking to someone from New Brunswick and he said 'Oh, well, hip hop isn't really my thing' because it's so strong here, it's such a strong art form, but he didn't really care for it at all. And I was like, 'Oh that's interesting,' because you just kind of associate hip hop with youth but it's not necessarily the case" (R.Sokoloski, personal interview, April 2009).

While Remix professes that it is focused on urban arts, and urban may have connotations of hip hop, Remix's definition of "urban arts" is quite loose and the program itself does not necessarily have any inherent connection with hip hop. Remix offers programs in three streams: recording arts, creative arts, and the art of business. Recording arts targets youth who are seeking out careers as "recording artists, producers, and audio engineers." In this stream, youth learn not only to make sound recordings, but also learn how to assemble press kits and write grants. The

creative arts stream is intended for youth who have interests in "graphic design, Illustration, Fashion Design, Videography, Photography, Writing, etc." The Art of Business stream has served "managers, publicists, community workers, party promoters, magazine editors" as well as "fashion and consulting entrepreneurs." In this stream, youth put together business and marketing plans, and take workshops with topics that include copyright law, managing credit, and financial planning. In many ways, The Remix Project offers many of the things that community arts organizers identify as important directions for policy makers to take up and support: Remix is housed in a facility that includes a recording studio, a business development centre, a visual art lab, and a video editing suite, and also offers industry professionals who mentor youth one-on-one. Additionally, "Remix works with young people to identify grants, bursaries, and loans to help them get their businesses and ventures started. Remix has started-up a brand new micro-credit program which will be able to lend loans of $300 to $1000" (The Remix Project, 2009). In these regards, Remix is unique in that it not only teaches skills in a creative arts profession, but also teaches the logistical aspects that are necessary to make a career in these professions.

While Remix is in many cases a model program and has received a Habitat Programme award from the United Nations for excellence in community safety and crime prevention, it also faces challenges of funding and sustainability. In June 2009 it undertook a funding drive as its main funder, National Crime Prevention Canada, had funded the project for its first three years as a pilot project, but was unable to find funding beyond this phase. Beyond this challenge, Remix also faces the problem of space: the building that the project is housed in will be torn down and

redeveloped into condominiums. To address these challenges, we need a comprehensive youth policy framework to offer long-term stability for programs like Remix.

While many community programs offer exciting avenues and examples of positive work with youth, it as important to note the challenges and limitations of this work as it is to celebrate their possibilities. Community programs may offer a site of learning and engagement for youth outside of the formal school system, but these sites encounter their own challenges and complexities of power and privilege in working towards affecting change and engaging youth. Nonetheless, programs like Ignite the Americas and The Remix Project offer interesting models not only of the importance of the arts in that they explicitly foreground the role that youth can play as cultural producers and participants in the creative industries and community development, but also offer models of how to foster youth involvement with cultural policy making and the creative industries. These two projects offer examples of what a creative ecology framework could look like in execution in individual projects, as these projects are conceptualized through a connection between youth, employment, creative industries, and community and economic development.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The Road Ahead: Towards a Comprehensive Youth Policy Framework to Support Youth Cultural Production

The film *Almost Famous* (2000) is Cameron Crowe's semi-autobiographical tale of a fifteen-year old high school student, William Miller, who goes from a bedroom-based rock music super-fan to an internationally-travelling music correspondent for *Rolling Stone* magazine. Through William's journey, Crowe suggests that successfully implanting oneself in creative industries is a matter of pluck, ingenuity, and faith. William's first entry into the field of rock journalism happens after meeting rock critic and *Creem* magazine editor Lester Bangs at the local radio station where Bangs is being interviewed. After the interview, William chats up Bangs and is given an assignment: write a review of the local Black Sabbath concert. Without a press pass, William attempts unsuccessfully to be let in backstage, but eventually gains entry when the up-and-coming opening act, the fictitious band Stillwater, arrives late, and William refers to the band members by name and praises their latest recordings. In these opening scenes, William's journey towards rock journalism is mapped out as a matter of being in the right place at the right time and knowing the right thing to say. William's review of the concert is a success, and he is, miraculously, contacted by *Rolling Stone* to write a piece profiling Stillwater, and in order to do so he embarks on a cross-country tour with them. Here, William has effortlessly gone from attending high school and obsessively listening to records in his bedroom, to regularly conversing on the phone with a legendary rock critic and receiving work requests from an important music magazine. As William embarks an adventure-filled cross-country tour, high school quickly becomes unimportant and is

left behind: his mother attends his high school graduation, but William does not. When William eventually sends *Rolling Stone* a tell-all piece with the nitty-gritty details of his time spent with Stillwater, the band denies the story and it goes unpublished; by the end of the film, though, Stillwater's lead singer is in William's bedroom making amends for his conduct, and calls *Rolling Stone* to give the go-ahead for William's tell-all cover story, seemingly cementing William's nascent career as a music journalist.

While the film did not meet with great box office success, it received good reviews, Oscar nominations, a win for Best Screenplay, and kudos from Roger Ebert as the best film of 2000. The coming-of-age story of the local boy who makes good seems have a powerful hold over our imaginations, but the ease with which William moves from ordinary high school kid to published journalist obscures the challenges that accompany the desire to be involved in the creative industries. While the film does highlight the importance of personal contacts and perseverance for success in the creative industries, it also masks the logistical struggles that many encounter to secure sustainable employment in creative fields. For William, the challenges that the film presents are only those of dealing with the personalities and shenanigans of the rock stars he is following; important contacts with key figures are instantly created, and William's integrity and honesty is repaid with career success. There is certainly something engaging about this type of narrative, but we need to better map the experience of youth as they go from high school students to making their way in the creative industries. This mapping will not only allow us to get a better sense of youth experiences, but also allow us to better support them, such that William's experience of the complete inconsequentiality of his formal education vis à vis his career

ambitions does not need to be the normative experience of youth in education systems as they seek out work in the creative industries. Here, I conclude with a final mapping of two experiences—with profiles of two young concert promoters in Montréal—whose experiences are not all Lester Bangs and *Rolling Stone* magazine, before turning to a series of recommendations about how government and the education system can better support youth practices in the creative industries.

Nick Allen and TigerLily Productions[2]

While Nick Allen's experiences in the world of music promotion are not those of William Miller outlined above, his youthful enthusiasm, combined with his ability to create personal contacts, are somewhat reminiscent of parts of the *Almost Famous* (2000) narrative. He outlines how he first came into contact with movers and shakers of Montréal's music scene in a way that recalls William's first entry to the Stillwater concert in the film:

> Me and two of my still best friends…I think I was 16 at the time and we wanted to go see Islands perform at Les Saints. Me and two of my friends are standing outside, we're like, 'what the fuck are we going to do? It's 18 plus, they're not letting us in.' So eventually we're waiting around for two hours, and Graham walks out, and I have no idea who Graham Van Pelt is, but my friend had just been at Osheaga [a Montréal music festival] a month earlier and remembered the guy from Think About Life, and I figured out that he was opening the show. 'Hey, Graham from Think about Life,' says my friend to Graham. 'Could you try to get us in?' And he says, 'yeah, sure.' So he pretends that we're his crew. His load-in crew! Three 16-year-old boys helping Fort Miracle, the one-man act, load his non-existent drum kit out of Les Saints … So the bouncer doesn't buy it, we go home. The three of us become really good friends after that, and then the next night we went to see Think About Life, and then Graham tells the story to the crowd, then I'm like 'This [Pop Montréal] is a cool music festival, if

[2] A pseudonym has been used for this respondent

> things like that happen.' I think I sent an email, it might have been to info@popmontreal.com, some sort of question involving an Arcade Fire concert, and then from there I think Dan Seligman, who runs the festival, told me about the secret [Arcade Fire] concert that happened…in a church basement. After that I offered to help out. It became once in a while, then for the past two summers, and now it's kinda like part-time volunteer, whenever they need an extra hand for something, I'm always down (N. Allen, personal interview, June 2009).

Through his volunteerism at the Pop Montréal office, Nick has almost gained an informal internship or apprenticeship in the business and logistics of music promotion and production, and states that the staff members at Pop Montréal, "each in their own respect," have become mentors for him. Nick describes his time with Pop Montréal as a learning experience in which he has learnt "everything. How a concert's settled, how it's run, how you email people, how you treat certain people certain ways. Recently, I started booking tours. Dan [Seligman] has been very helpful in explaining to me…. Basically he sends me templates of a contract and I just edit it to suit my needs" (N. Allen, personal interview, June 2009).

While Nick continues to volunteer at Pop and is increasing brought into assisting in running the festival in aspects including selection of artists who will perform, he also runs his own music promotion company, TigerLily Productions, which he started when he was 17 with his friends from his Think About Life anecdote. He describes the challenges of being a small player putting on small local shows in a scene that is full of large music production companies:

> When there is so many players in the game: Gillett who does the big shows, then there's Greenland who does a little bit smaller, then there's Pop who puts on the special, very interesting shows, and then there's Blue Skies, who takes almost everything … trying to keep things fresh, I guess that's one of the problems … When you're using the same bands who play once a month, their friends aren't necessarily going to come out. You got to find a band who has a balance of fans and friends. That's the key to local shows. It's great to see local bands who don't

> have any record labels … have genuine fans (N. Allen, personal interview, June 2009).

When describing putting out these small local shows, Nick displays his astute and savvy abilities to mobilize his personal network in order to further the goals of his production company:

> I've started to build up more of a team. My best friend David is kinda like the number two. Especially if I become more involved in the booking aspect of this organization, he's going to help [with] the local production kind of work. I have someone in charge of the blog, which is becoming a website, which is more money, which is money we don't have. So I have a production member of the team, then I have an internet member of the team, I'm friends with a graphic designer who's going to take care of all the graphics. When we do make a bit of money, it goes into this company account that I've set up, which is not fully legal. I'm kinda halfsies on the legal aspects of this thing. I think in the first year and a half we made $300 total. I spent almost 100% of that. I bought this Zoom H4 recorder, which is a mobile four track and you can plug it right into the sound board. It has two XLR inputs … Now we get crazy quality rips of every show! I want to start putting them out. And now that we're buying a website we can post our own stuff. I'm friendly with these guys at Digital Bird Studios on Mont Royal and they're into expanding their portfolio. We're trying to do once a month an interview/concert footage segment that will go up on their website and eventually ours if we buy space. So [TigerLily Productions is] just broadening and broadening and broadening (N. Allen, personal interview, June 2009).

Moreover, through his experiences of booking tours for local bands when they tour, Nick describes expanding his personal contacts across Canada: "Now I know people in Thunder Bay, people out in Regina. And a lot of these people are people that I've got in contact with through bands that I've done shows for that have been [from] these towns. The Di Ninno brothers in Medicine Hat. People like that are just gems. Or Marshall Burns from Regina. It's a beautiful network." Nick's passion for what he does and his willingness to carry out these activities without direct financial rewards clearly come across when he describes the projects he is involved with, but

he also describes challenges of juggling school with his production company. Now 18, Nick is entering his second and final year of the demanding program at college:

> I put on a lot of concerts in May and June, and now July, I'm kinda easing up on the booking now, especially because I have a big semester coming up … I've had nights where it's an 8 am class and I get home at 2, and I've been out the whole day. I'm trying to avoid that this coming semester. In the school year, it [has been] about 2 shows a month, and in the summer it's about 5 shows a month and I think I'm going to bring it back down to one from August to December [the length of the CEGEP semester] (N. Allen, personal interview, June 2009).

In addition to juggling these two different aspects of his life, Nick also elaborates the challenges of "being kinda halfsies on the legal aspects" of music promotion that he mentioned above:

> I really don't want to go into management and all that stuff. I might have to take a course or two eventually, to cover my legal ass. I heard this horror story of this promoter in Ottawa who kinda does what I do, called i(heart)music, he puts on most of the indie shows in that town. He got fucked! You're supposed to pay—every recording artist that's a part of SOCAN, every concert that you do, Pop Montréal does it, Blue Skies does it, I don't do it though. Every show you do, 3% of the door is supposed to go to SOCAN if there are [SOCAN] artists involved. And this guy, after doing like 80 shows in 2-3 years owes them like $3000, $4000. If that were to happen to me one day, that would not be good! Stuff like that, I really need to start [getting on top of] (N. Allen, personal interview, June 2009).

While Nick mentions his potential need to take a few business courses, he also states that "I think after CEGEP I might take a year or two off." This disconnect between what Nick is studying and what he is pursuing, or between the formal education system and pathways in the creative industries, is not unique to Nick, but suggests a need for rethinking and re-conceptualization of policies and educational systems such that formal education is able to be more than a pleasant aside to ambitions that seem to have no connection to what happens inside classrooms for many youth involved in cultural production. Like many youth, Nick is exuberant about the potential of

working long-term in the creative industries, which he thinks is "totally" feasible: "I feel like if I could pay rent and eat. Imagine existing, and by existing and I mean eating and paying rent … if you could do that by doing something you want to do, that's the name of the game. I don't fucking want to be an accountant or a doctor, I don't care about that stuff. Until I need my accountant" (N. Allen, personal interview, June 2009).

As seen across this dissertation, many youth share this ambition of "doing something you want to do" in the creative industries, and are seeking out ways that enable them to make a modest living while pursuing these personal projects. For many, this involves grappling and navigating and sometimes fumbling their way through the logistical aspects of their ambitions, such as the accounting and legal aspects. Rather than rely on the William Miller narrative that success comes to those who happen to be in the right place at the right time and know the right people, we need a policy framework that is able to respond to the needs of youth such that success in the creative industries is equitable and sustainable.

Meyer Billurcu and Blues Skies Turn Black

Now 33, Meyer Billurcu has been involved in various aspects of the music industry since he was 18. Like Nick, Meyer is committed to being a music promoter for the long-term, and states that he "can't imagine not doing this [running his production company, Blues Skies Turn Black]." However, after nearly 10 years of running his own production company, Meyer displays more of a seasoned realism about success in the creative industries, and claims that he will always have to

supplement running his production company with other types of employment due to the nature of the type of work he does:

> Being a promoter is being a risk-taker. It's gambling. You're making an offer and you're hoping for the best. Just because you think something is a 90% sure sell-out [show] doesn't mean it is. There's a show that we did a few months ago where we lost thousands of dollars on it. But meanwhile, on the rest of the tour, that band sold-out [their shows]. It was just Montréal that was a bad city … We've been doing this nine years, it's going to be 10 years. There's always going to be part of us [that thinks] maybe we should quit, you have a string of bad shows or something's not working. But you'll have a string of really good shows, and you're 'this is why we got into this' (M. Billurcu, personal interview, July 2009).

Like Nick, Meyer also describes the importance of fandom and mentorship in his own origin story of his route towards becoming a music promoter:

> The genesis of it was Brian [Neuman, Meyer's partner in Blues Skies Turn Black] and me went to Washington D.C. … and we wanted to visit the Dischord record house. The address is on the back of all the Dischord cds. It was a big influence, for both of us. So we went to this house, we went to the address and rang the doorbell and an old woman answered. We were like, 'This must be the wrong house … there's two streets with the same name.' So we just asked her, 'Is this the Dischord house?' We didn't know what else to do! She said, 'Oh yeah, you found the right house. I'm Ginger Mackaye, I'm Ian Mackaye's mother' … We were kind of blown away. They had a letter for anyone who visited the house that said 'Hi, welcome to the Dischord house. This is where Ian lived until he was 19. He doesn't live here anymore, but we kept the Dischord address here because he wasn't sure where he was going to be living at any time. While in D.C., you should visit these record stores and these venues.' We were kinda really blown away, because you hear about D.I.Y and underground, for us it was still a big thing, but then when you realize it's really like a mom and pop operation, it kind of changed our perspective on a lot of stuff. It inspired us to want to do something similar in Montréal. For us, Fugazi was still a *big* band. Any band that plays Metropolis, to us, is a *big* band … when you realize that, holy shit, they are doing everything themselves, and they've hired their friends to work, it's not a real corporation …. [Rather] it's a real community thing. I was like, 'hey, we should do something like that in Montréal.'

Here, Meyer chronicles the importance of existing examples of grassroots and DIY culture to inspire youth to start their own initiatives. Founded in 1980, the independent record label Dischord has been able to survive and maintain their DIY principles in increasingly challenging times for the record industry. If existing examples of small-scale practices are important to motivate youth to start their own initiatives, it is important to support these practices so that they can continue to exist. Seeing the small and localized nature of the seminal Dischord record label allowed Meyer to imagine himself doing something similar. He describes his process of starting his own activities in the creative industries as follows:

> And a couple years later, [Fugazi] actually ended up putting out a movie called *Instrument*, and we heard that there were screenings happening across the States, and Vancouver was the first Canadian city doing a screening. I remember being like 'Man, we really wished someone would do that [put on a screening] in Montréal.' A light bulb went off over our heads. We're like, 'Hey! We should do it!' We contacted them, and they were really skeptical because here's two guys with no experience or anything asking them to put on a screening for their movie. But they're like "Ok, let's try it." We just started reaching out to different media outlets. We put out posters all over the city, the two of us did everything ourselves, and we ended up having one of the most successful screenings that they had. We really liked doing that, it was a lot of fun, but our main interest was to be a label. We ended up meeting a guy who ran a label and was putting on shows. His name was Marc Lucas and he ran a label called Mintaka Conspiracy… he put out the first recordings by Patrick Watson and We Are Wolves, and a bunch of other bands that went on to become really popular. He was supposed to do the first Malajube record, but his label folded. He asked us if we were interested in helping him promote shows, because he was just one guy, he has just had a kid, and couldn't really do it anymore. That's how it got started. We started with him, and after a few shows, he passed the torch, 'You guys should do this, I can't do it anymore.' We really wanted to be a label, so he put us in the right direction of how to put a record out. Our first record was by a Toronto band called Blake, it was on vinyl. We did a CD-R before that for a friend of ours from college (M. Billurcu, personal interview, July 2009).

This origin story describes Meyer's involvement in a variety of areas of the music industry, which began with putting on a film screening event, and continued with

running a record label and putting on concerts. This dabbling in a variety of activities of the creative industries is common amongst youth, and presents challenges for current discipline-specific funding structures, and specialized training programs in education systems. Like Nick, Meyer describes a disconnect between his formal education and his career ambitions, but also describes mobilizing the knowledge and skills he gained in art school when he started his production company:

> Brian lived in Toronto, wasn't doing anything there. His dad was like, 'You've got to get out of the house. I'm shipping you to Montréal. I have a friend who's going to give you a job.' So he moved back here. We'd known each other since high school but we weren't really friends. We became friends when he lived in Toronto through mutual friends so when he moved here we actually became really good friends. I remember one day, before the Fugazi screening, he called me from his job, I was working in a record store, he was working in Internet research, he called me, and said 'We need to do something or I'm going to blow my fucking head off.' He hated his job … so that's when things really started happening. I was in art school at the time, but it wasn't really gelling for me. I wasn't finding what I wanted to do or meeting people. I liked art but I was more into low-brow art like comic books and stuff, and my teachers and me were on different wavelengths. They weren't really interested in what I was doing, didn't really offer any real help. I was really into music, but I wasn't a really good musician, neither was Brian, which is how we got involved in this. Once Blue Skies started, I just decided, fuck it, I'm going to use what I learnt in school, apply it to this company. First I self-published a few comic books. That was the first time we used the name Blue Skies Turn Black, for those comics. I started promoting a few shows … I made posters. In school I did drawing classes, silk-screening classes. And then we meet a couple local bands. And I'm like, 'Fuck it.' I wasn't interested in doing anything else with silk-screening than making record covers. So I started making record covers. So I was using my education, or using my time in school to kick-start Blue Skies. I was doing computer classes—I did our first website from what I learned in computer classes (M. Billurcu, personal interview, July 2009).

Meyer describes starting his Blue Skies Turn Black production company as an alternative to meaningless work for his partner Brian, and an alternative to his own seemingly pointless experiences in art school. Here, Meyer doesn't describe his art

school education as irrelevant to his later career direction, but describes applying his acquired skills in areas outside of the classroom. Beyond this, Meyer describes acquiring knowledge and skills that relate to running a production company through practical experience rather than formal training:

> None of us have any business training. We were really ambitious in the beginning, but really naïve. We put out five records in the span of two or three years, which doesn't seem like a lot, but when you're a nobody label, it's a lot. Our whole thing was, good music sells itself, you don't need publicists, you don't need distribution, you just put records out, band goes on tour, the rest will take care of itself. There's a certain truth to that, but it does take a lot more work than that to really push records. You really need to try to get radio play with the college radio, you should do ads in various zines and magazines. We started learning that we have to do a little bit more for the records than just putting them out. It got to the point where most of the bands broke up and/or we were more interested in pushing their record than they were. Some bands didn't really want to tour …. Around 2003, we put out the second record by Rockets Red Glare, who were really good friends of ours from Toronto. I guess they would be the flagship band of the label. But they were like, 'We're doing one more tour, then we're breaking up.' I kind of ended the label for a couple of years and that's when the promotion side took over. To me, the term 'promoter' was like industry and scumbags. I was like, I run a record label that happens to do shows. And then a few of years go by and no one even knows that we had a label. Most people were like, 'Oh, you had a label? I thought you were just promoters' (M. Billurcu, personal interview, July 2009).

Meyer describes learning how to run a record label though trial and error, and that his experiences running a record label led to his current focus on concert promotion. Meyer's experiences of navigating and negotiating his way through the creative industries rather than setting out on a clear career path are common to many youth, as is the growing evaporation of older binaries between seemingly "commercialized" (music promotion) and "authentic" (DIY record label) aspects of the creative industries. Meyer describes his experiences of learning concert promotion in a similar trial and error fashion:

> So we started doing more promoting and press. How we started is bands would contact us direct, [play] our show, cover our expenses, and any money after we would just split with the band. Then, when we started dealing with booking agents, it became a whole different ball park. Agents were like 'Send us your offer.' And this to us was like, 'I don't get what that means.' What do you mean send an offer? You tell me how much you want for your band. But we started learning how things were done, we asked some people who had been booking shows, 'What does an offer mean?' 'Well, you make a budget, and you offer them a certain amount of money, it's a guarantee.' This blew our minds. We were just used to door deals. We started learning how to make offers and what 'break even' was and what 'promoter profit' was. Our first couple of offers, I don't think we had promoter profit, so we weren't really making a lot of money. One agent was like, 'Hey, you guys didn't put your promoter profit in there.' She was really nice, she helped us out a lot. It really became more business-y. We really we starting to learn all the tricks of the trade … After a certain while, you learn how to do things. [Now], we have a much better idea of what a band is worth, for a lack of better word. When a band comes to town, we're like, 'This is probably how many people we'll get [at the show]. You have to think what size venue is good, how much you're going to pay in rent, how much you're going to spend on promotion. If you do a show for a band at Metropolis you can't just put up 100 posters in the [Mile End] neighbourhood. You've got to put ads in the paper. We've definitely become a lot smarter about things (M. Billurcu, personal interview, July 2009).

Unlike the William Miller model of near overnight success, Meyer describes a gradual development of his production company from self-publishing comic books to becoming a major contender in the Montréal music industry. While he has now become an established presence in the Montréal scene, this wasn't always the case:

> When we started, no one wanted to give us the time of day. Most booking agents didn't want to talk to us, some labels wouldn't talk to us. But once we started proving ourselves, some agents were great and they were willing to give us a shot, and things went really well, and other agents kind of fell in line, like, 'Hey, those guys are doing pretty good.' I think the turning point came for us four years after we started and we did a Modest Mouse show at the Rialto. I remember this one agent wouldn't even talk to us, and then he saw that we did that show, and then started offering us some of his bands (M. Billurcu, personal interview, July 2009).

As Meyer's comments above suggest, his production company is far from a highly lucrative scheme, but it is also something that falls outside of the boundaries of ventures that are supported by government funding structures. Meyer's experiences point to a the importance of mentorship and existing examples of small-scale practices, like Dischord records, but also point to a lack of long-term support from mentors or government policies in his case:

> When we started, we were not really a label and not really … we've tried [to apply for grants] but we've never got any. Now that the label's done and we're pretty much just promoters, it's really hard to get grants. There's grants you can get as a band, there's grants you can get as a label, but a grant as promoters? We've tried to find a way that is was possible but we haven't found it yet. When we started, Blues Skies was totally funded by Brian and me, and whatever little money we had saved up, and now things are a little different. There is a bank account [but] we've never received any [government] funding (M. Billurcu, personal interview, July 2009).

Rather than pursue the government funding route, Meyer and his Blue Skies partner, along with other partners, opened a music venue, Il Motore, in the summer of 2008:

> Opening a venue, it's almost like guaranteed payment, because people like to drink. We did an early Hot Chip show, and it was pretty well attended, but we had come just a little under from breaking even. But the bar did great, the bands were all paid, everyone had a great night except for us, we were like, 'Wait a minute, something's not right in this equation.' And that's when we starting saying ok, we need to get involved in the bar side of things, because that's a way to kind of protect ourselves. I would love to be able to say, Blue Skies, we can totally make a living, but it's too risky. You can make $2000 or $3000 one day but you can lose $6000 the next day. It's never a sure thing and you always have to have money in the bank to make sure if that loss does happen, you can cover it (M. Billurcu, personal interview, July 2009).

Meyer's comments here suggest an entrepreneurial model of carving out one's own niche in the creative industries. Like many youth, Meyer has spent his late teens and all of his twenties working towards having a sustainable source of income from involvement in the creative industries. While the ad-hoc pathway that Meyer has

pursued is characteristic of many youth, better support for these small-scale practices would mean more even and sustainable community development and would mean more equitable points of entry for youth into the creative industries. Better support for small-scale youth practices requires changes in the way that government and the education system address youth, as detailed below.

Recommendations

1. Moving Towards a Canadian Federal Comprehensive Youth policy Framework that Supports Small-Scale and Self-Generated Youth Activities

Chapter 3 outlined the "scattershot" nature of federal cultural policy and youth policy. While structures do exist in the both of these areas, these structures exist in isolated silos that do not work towards shared goals or visions, and do not allow for communication and coordination across sectors (Jeffrey, 2008). For example, while the Department of Canadian Heritage does not have a youth arts sector, it does have programs under the rubric of "youth participation," but programs in this sector are not geared towards cultural employment, or employment of any kind, as employment falls within the purview of HRSDC. What we need instead are services that are integrated and coordinated across government sectors that both target systemic youth issues, and "contribute to long-term positive outcomes for youth" (Jeffrey, 2008, p.4). In terms of youth involvement in the creative industries, these long-term positive outcomes for youth might include more stability in their line of work, more knowledge about how to assess resources, more equity in gaining access to resources, and more of an opportunity to make a living

wage from self-generated small-scale creative industries practices. A comprehensive youth policy framework is needed to work towards these outcomes. The Commonwealth Youth Programme (1990) characterizes a youth policy framework as follows:

> A practical demonstration and declaration of the priority and directions that a country intends to give to the development of its young women and men. A [youth policy framework] specifically represents an inclusive statement that encapsulates the elements of vision, framework and realistic guidelines from which strategies and initiatives can be developed to facilitate meaningful youth participation and development.

While youth participation is specifically mentioned here, small-scale youth cultural production could also be targeted and better supported by a national youth policy framework.

It should be noted that at the provincial level, British Columbia has had a youth policy framework since 2000, as has Québec, since 2001. The Secrétariat à la Jeunesse, which administers the Québec policy, notes that Québec's youth policy, which was discussed in Chapter 4, "piqued the interest of other Canadian provinces and foreign delegations from Europe, South America and Africa. Some of them even intend to base their youth strategies on Québec's" (Government of Québec, 2009, p.4). Despite the existence of these provincial frameworks, further federal work needs to be done. Québec's Secrétariat à la Jeunesse notes the overlap between provincial and federal programs directed towards youth:

> In actions aimed at young people, the federal government administers its own youth programs, which to varying degrees cohabit with Québec's. In certain cases, agreements between the federal and Québec governments have led to the creation of joint programs. Overlapping, though, is visible in other areas, notably in employment, education, and health care. The Québec youth policy is an opportunity to ensure that Québec maintains a consistent position on young people, thus bolstering the Québec government's scope for initiative and reaffirming

> its priorities when acting on youth issues (Government of Québec, 2001, p.13).

While there may be consistency within Québec in terms of its youth programs, the overlap and gaps between provincial and federal programs suggests the need for a broader federal policy structure that coordinates with both provincial and municipal policy structures. Indeed, Zemans and Coles (forthcoming) argue that

> Without a national policy framework that facilitates an understanding of the ways in which their policies and programs share strategic directions and goals, the ability for partners to efficiently share critical research, knowledge and resources is considerably limited. This has the effect of producing a complicated sectoral landscape for youth arts in Canada marked by both overlap and significant gaps in support mechanisms (p.12).

More research needs to done into charting these municipal, provincial, and federal cultural policy layers so that these layers are clearer and these overlaps and gaps can be begin to be addressed.

A comprehensive federal youth policy framework will be effective if it contains mechanisms for this coordination of services across government sectors: "comprehensive youth policy frameworks can ensure the establishment of institutional arrangements and procedures designed to integrate youth policy into federal, regional, and community planning, and assist in the coordination and funding of all related activities (Jeffrey, 2008, p.13).This coordination also needs to be based in common goals and visions; Jeffrey (2008) identifies that a "policy framework requires a statement of goals, broad outcomes, or objectives that set out what the policy is intended to achieve. This unifies all other supporting policy and program initiatives and assists stakeholders in determining action related to youth. Without a shared actionable vision of the desired outcomes for youth, efforts to focus supports required from families, institutions, and communities result in

increased fragmentation, frustration, and failure" (p.11). To be appropriate to contemporary youth needs, this vision needs to underscore support for self-generated youth activities and include provisions for interdisciplinary and small-scale work—whether in cultural production or in other fields. Without an existing policy structure that acknowledges the importance of youth activities it is difficult to register the bedroom economies of small-scale cultural production because, as discussed in Chapter 2, most definitions of the cultural industries revolve around industrialized forms of production that do not speak to contemporary youth activities. Indeed, a contemporary vision statement that targets youth needs to recognize youth as producers or generators of activities rather than consumers or recipients of programs. This vision would move beyond a youth engagement/full citizenship model and towards a model that targets and supports youth producers. Moreover, once youth are registered as active—rather than "at-risk" or potentially/latently criminal, as they are seen in a deficit model—it is foreseeable to create mechanisms that include youth in decision-making processes. The creation of social infrastructure to support a youth policy framework and include youth in decision making processes could allow for more sustainable long-term funding for community organizations that work with youth. This lack of sustainability in funding for projects that target youth has been heard across this dissertation; indeed, for "youth-serving programs, youth-led projects and higher level youth organizing, concerns have been raised about the lack of structural sustainability and the strain that is becoming evident based on a patchwork approach of project-by-project funding and the absence of supportive policy frameworks (*Foundations & Pipelines*,

p.1). A comprehensive youth policy framework will not allow only for more sustainability, it will also foster better support for youth practices:

> The current situation does not provide a strong mechanism for youth currently involved in initiatives to connect with each other and access the training, resources and networks that can enhance their work. It is also not effective enough in fostering connections with mentors and partners, or in creating strong foundations for the transition of youth into adulthood. Sustained support is needed to ensure ongoing development at the individual, group and community level in youth organizing work (*Foundations & Pipelines*, p.2).

While youth need to be specifically targeted by a more comprehensive policy structure, this policy also needs to based in a community development model that champions a bottom-up view of championing culture for all, as discussed in Chapter 3.

2. A shift in Educational Models Towards the Creation of Learning Communities

Chapter 3 outlined the lack of appropriateness of the national training centre model for the majority of contemporary youth practices in the creative industries, and also outlined Ruben Gaztambide-Fernandez's (2008) alternate vision of arts education:

> Artistic education must shift its role from imparting information and knowledge, to becoming a space where information is exchanged and knowledge constructed on the basis of public interaction and not private study, as most artistic learning is designed. For curriculum to become relevant to the processes of common culture, the curriculum of artistic education must be envisioned as an open public space where students connect with each other, share ideas about their work, exchange materials, and develop new techniques. Institutions of artistic education should provide resources and offer instruction on those technical skills that become relevant to students in the process of creative consumption/production. Young artists would take a lead in establishing their own creative networks and identifying those practices that are most relevant or salient to the specificities of their cultural

> practice. In this sense, institutions of artistic education would be peripheral to cultural activity, while at the same time becoming hubs where critique and technological support are readily available (p.255).

What is key in Gaztambide-Fernandez's vision is the openness of the arts education institution and the connections between the institution and the surrounding community. Many of the youth interviewed in this dissertation have post-secondary degrees, but these degrees have little bearing on their present line of work in the creative industries. Some of these youth have mentioned the need for further training in the logistical business and legal aspects of the creative industries, but do not cite the formal education system as a means to acquire this training. Envisioning institutions of higher learning as open public spaces may facilitate some of the back and forth movement in and out of post-secondary education that could help support youth involvement in the creative industries. As discussed in Chapter 2, current innovations in the instruction of media education may work towards some of the provisions of this vision of arts education being conceptualized as an open public space, but further connections between schools and outside institutions need to be made such that schools can truly become open public spaces. Chapter 2 outlined that current research in media education favours small-scale collaborative creative projects, and further work needs to be done to have these types of learning activities put into curricula. What is important here is that youth take an active role in creating their own projects and working with others; this model differs from the training school model in which youth are expected to master existing traditions. Providing youth with opportunities in the formal education system to navigate the aspects of their own projects is important for contemporary youth cultural production; as has been seen across this dissertation, what is needed to better support youth practices is

more training in the logistical aspects of the creative industries. The formal education system does not need to directly instruct these logistical aspects in its program content, but designing curriculum that gives youth opportunities to actively seek out and complete their own projects would better equip them for a future in small-scale self-generated careers.

In addition to the vision of arts education as an open public space, another useful model is the hub school. As discussed in Chapter 4, the British policy document *Creative Britain: New Talents for a New Economy* includes the move towards the "hub" model for schools by fostering connections with institutions of higher learning through the sharing of curriculum, industry contacts, and facilities between schools and universities, and providing mentoring for students and exchanges for staff. This vision is based in a vision that is mutually beneficially for schools and post-secondary institutions. This model could be useful to support youth involvement in the creative industries as it would allow students to work on projects that have some connection with the outside world rather than being assignments for school credit alone. Further research could be done to see what this British model of the hub school looks like on the ground, and if it has potentially applications in the Canadian context. In Québec, this vision of the school as a "hub" rather than an isolated unit is not directly spelled out in educational policy, but the vision of teacher education set out by MELS's official teacher training document envisions strong partnerships with local schools: "[Teachers in training] will work in collaboration with the other members of teaching staff and cooperate with the school team, parents, and various social partners, in attaining educational objectives" (2001, p.201). In order to achieve this collaboration, MELS states that "partnerships

between the university and the school system must be strengthened and extend beyond the organization of practical training" (2001, p.204). While MELS calls for this strengthening, further mechanisms need to be put into place such that partnerships between schools and universities and schools and communities and community organizations exist, and such that arts education can move away from an insular subject area and into something that is relevant to the experiences of contemporary youth cultural producers. The field of education can share expertise in this regard of partnerships between the university and the school system with the model of the professional development school, which envisions teacher education taking place in schools that are partnered with universities: in this model, teacher education happens predominantly on-site at schools, and academic research takes place in classrooms. In this last regard, academic research in youth practices could move towards more concrete, empirical and ethnographic-oriented studies, which have often been lacking, as discussed in Chapter 2. Above all, youth will benefit not only through connections to outside expertise in their classrooms, but also through academic examinations of contemporary youth needs and practices that could lead to a better formulated comprehensive youth policy framework. The formulation of this policy framework is key, as an improved education system alone cannot create more equity and sustainability in the creative industries.

From bedrooms, to classrooms, to studios, dark rooms, and green rooms, youth are increasingly producing creative works, and this work is no longer a passing hobby for many young people. Above all, these pathways of contemporary youth need to register more loudly at the levels of policy and education such that youth

needs can be better served, and we can work towards healthy, sustainable community development that actively includes youth.

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