Global Issues, Music & MTV

**Background**

- Globalization has economic roots and political consequences, but it also has brought into focus the power of culture in this global environment.
  - The power to bind and to divide in a time when the tensions between integration and separation tug at every issue.

**Background**

- In the 21st century, communication, media, and information exports will become the primary engine of the global economy for the United States.
Background

- The domestic US audience is not only large and wealthy, but it also has a substantial and varied taste for entertainment and media products of all types
  - This continent wide market provides the economic resources necessary to support a global culture

Global Television

- Foreign television networks consume large quantities of US television shows via syndication.
  - Particularly attractive are US made situation comedies and dramas with high production values
    - It is estimated that an audience in excess of a billion viewers viewed Baywatch in 148 nations.
    - The Simpsons is available in 70 nations and is the longest running animated comedy

Global Television

- In the 90’s a shift occurred.
- Major networks replaced expensive dramas and sitcoms with programs based on reality shows or the news magazine format.
  - This created a steep increase in the prices of the fewer remaining successful sitcoms available for syndication
The Need to Re-Invent

- With costs escalating, audience size shrinking, and advertising revenues decreasing (because you’re playing to a smaller audience), US television networks are reengineering their positions and strategies.
  - Despite these problems, foreign markets are still lucrative for US producers

Climate of Deregulation

- With the introduction of private broadcasting outlets, government regulation was reduced in favor of market forces
- As a result, the viewing and listening public now has substantially more media choices, and US producers have larger markets for their products
  - Not surprisingly, a growing number of the foreign options have a distinct made-in America flavor.

Modeling: Creating Indigenous Programs With US Cultural Values

- Foreign nations, with smaller audience bases, are unable to compete with the expensive, high quality of US dramatic television programming
- To fill the available broadcast schedule and maximize revenues, they purchase US syndicated programs
  - Thus, experiencing an erosion of their own cultures
Modeling: Creating Indigenous Programs With US Cultural Values

- Reality and game shows do not transfer as well, because themes tend to be parochial and time sensitive.
  - Foreign producers tend to copy the news magazine or reality show format and insert local content, announcers and venues.

Australian examples:
- Newlywed Game – A Current Affair
- MTV’s Real World – A House from Hell
- Its own
- Wheel of Fortune, Funniest Home Videos, And 60 Minutes

Are MTV and the Music Industry the Milemarkers?

- U.S. cultural products ranging from movies and TV programs to music and computer software are overtaking aerospace as the primary U.S. employers and exporters.
  - MTV is available in well over 100 countries and a potential audience of 400 million households.
  - U.S. music industry accounts for 50 percent of global sales with revenues of $8 billion annually.

International Music Industry

- In the early 2000's, global music sales were over $40 billion.
- 3 leading regions in terms of sales are the US, Europe, and Japan.
- English is the dominant language of artists.
- All recording artists depend on foreign markets.
Major Players

- Vivendi Universal Music Group (France)
- Sony BMG Music Entertainment (Japan/Germany)
- EMI Group (UK)
- Warner Music Group (US)

- Control every aspect of the supply chain
  - Recording
  - Video
  - Copyright
  - Distribution

Vivendi Universal Music Group (France)

- The largest global music company
- Ventures in 71 countries, over 10,700 employees
- 25% or the world’s market
- Labels include – MCA, Universal, DreamWorks, Mercury, Motown, Decca, Phillips

Sony BMG Music Entertainment (Japan/Germany)

- A merger of Sony Corporation of Japan & Bertelsmann of Germany
- 25% of the market
- Through Sonopress, BMG is the world’s largest producer of CD’s
- Labels include – Columbia, Epic, Nashville, Sony Classical
EMI Group (UK)
- Owns EMI the world’s largest publisher of sheet music
- Labels include – EMI, Capitol and Virgin Records

Warner Music Group (US)
- Owned by Brofman a Canadian company
- Labels include – Warner Music International, Elektra, Atlantic, Reprise, Rhino

MTV: The Dominant Global Music Connection
- MTV reaches over 340 million viewers in 140 countries, particularly in Europe, Asia.
- 100 affiliated international networks:
  - MTV (Latino, Brazil, Europe, Mandarin, Asia, India, Australia, New Zealand, Africa, etc)
- MTV owns several cable television programming services
  - MTV2, VH1, Nickelodeon/Nick at Nite, Country Music Television (CMT), TNN, and TV Land
MTV: The Dominant Global Music Connection

- Even though MTV’s global airtime is filled with locally produced programming, teens around the world are listening and viewing the same videos.
- Music projects that fail to produce a video to accompany their recordings are excluded from MTV’s playtime.

MTV & Electronic Colonialism

- MTV wants the minds of the global youth culture, particularly for advertisers of youth-oriented products.
- MTV promotes a mainstream diet of primarily British & American artists.
- Through electronic colonialism, MTV has managed to marginalize many indigenous artists.
- Both Hollywood film studios and global record conglomerates only use MTV as a major advertising vehicle.

MTV & Social Conscience

- Promotes global awareness of social problems.
- Taking a liberal agenda to a finely tuned audience segment.
Final Note

- BMG & Sony have avoided the criticism directed at American counterparts for achieving control of the cultural media market.
- Yet foreign conglomerates have accepted the increased importance of US cultural industries in promoting global sales.
- The universality of music and other mass culture products is spread globally while produced by a few core nations.