

Globalization and the Psychological Anthropology of Childhood and Adolescence

Thomas S. Weisner

Department of Psychiatry and Department of Anthropology

UCLA

Edward D. Lowe

Department of Psychiatry

UCLA

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## ABSTRACT

The anthropology of childhood and adolescence documents and accounts for the marvelous variety of childhoods and adolescences found around the world. The psychocultural study of childhood is about how children and adolescents around the world acquire, transform, share, integrate and transmit cultural knowledge. This scientific project is central to the study of globalization and its impacts on children, adolescents, and youth. Globalization demands a pluralistic, cross-cultural view of childhood and adolescence. Psychological anthropology has always had such a view.

Differing national, local, and institutional patterns of life remain deeply important in the lives of children, adolescents and their families, in spite of global flows of information, people, and resources, and psychological anthropology is in the position, both theoretically and methodologically, to understand such diversity. First, evidence from broad surveys of the state of the world's children and families suggests that local, cultural and population-specific variations in the impacts of globalization are found everywhere, and that global processes seem to enhance children's and families' well being in some respects while also increasing inequality. Second, psychological anthropologists focus on topics in development that both impact and are impacted by global processes: identity, self, trust and attachment, cognition and memory, acquisition and sharing of cultural knowledge (of for example parenting, childhood stages, child health), social behavior, personality, and character. Finally, psychological anthropology is concerned with those, including children, adolescents and youth, who are often powerless and marginal. Children with disabilities, at risk of abuse, violence, or threats to physical and mental health, are affected by global processes and accompanying inequalities.

The anthropology of childhood and adolescence documents and accounts for the marvelous variety of childhoods and adolescences found around the world. The psychocultural anthropology of childhood asks how children and adolescents around the world acquire, transform, share, integrate, and transmit cultural knowledge. This scientific project is central to the study of globalization and its impacts on children, adolescents, and youth. Globalization processes impact all parts of the world through immigration, market economics, and political conflicts, and it changes the roles of children and youth as well. Hence globalization demands a pluralistic, cross-cultural view of childhood and adolescence. Psychological anthropology and the cross-cultural study of childhood have always had such a view. Since the psychological anthropology of human development specializes in the intensive study of the developing person and family life in local contexts and populations, psychological anthropology is uniquely able to understand those varying local forms of, and responses to, globalization. The field is especially suited to provide empirical, evidence-based research and policy recommendations regarding children, families, and globalization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Strange as psychological anthropology is, it is fair to say that there is not a consensus theory of how local and global cultural communities socialize children and adolescents. Rather, there are many competing ways of conceptualizing and measuring cultural contexts and how they influence young people, and there are different views concerning which features of the human mind matter most for the acquisition, internalization, transformation, and enactment of cultural practices, especially under conditions of global change. Although there may not be a shared theory of culture or mind, the great advantage of the field is that it always focuses on concrete, measurable features of cultural context (specific beliefs, material and social resources, kinds of interactional styles, sociolinguistic and communication styles, child age differences) and

tries to measure these. The other great advantage is that the field does take seriously the mechanisms of the mind, and how these develop in childhood and adolescence (learning styles, memory processes, scripts and schematized knowledge, self and identity theory, psychodynamic mechanisms, sensitive periods in development, evolved capacities at different ages, etc.). There are great advantages for the study of globalization and childhood. No matter how differently globalization is instantiated locally in the lives of young people, some version of these theories of context and mind are going to help to understand globalization and its impacts. The psychological anthropology of childhood and adolescence does not or (should not) simply revert to generic and ungrounded notions of “discourses” to account for variations in childhoods. Nor does the field focus on exclusively moral evaluations focused only on negative impacts of globalizations, or a generic, non-specific variable called globalizing “forces,” absent some specific theory of human development, mind, and cultural context.

An ecological-cultural (ecocultural) perspective on human development, though certainly not a consensus theory in the field, is one that has widespread support (LeVine et al., 1994; Super and Harkness, 1997; Whiting and Edwards, 1988; Weisner, 1997). Ecocultural theories recognize evolved capacities and individual differences among children (Small, 1998), focusing on the local sociocultural contexts and cultural ecology of particular communities. The features of cultural ecology that seem to be particularly important for children’s development around the world include: the subsistence and work cycles of the family and community; health and demographic characteristics; threats to safety; the nature of the division of labor by age and sex; children’s tasks and work, including domestic, child care and school work; roles of fathers and older siblings; children’s play and play groups; roles of women and girls in the community and supports for them; the varied sources of cultural influence and information available; and the

extent of community heterogeneity in models of care and child activities (Weisner, 1984). Many of these features are precisely the ones impacted by globalization (e.g., the explosion in varied sources of information; greater community heterogeneity and overlapping communities; new work; demographic and mortality changes; changing status of women and girls).

Every cultural community provides developmental pathways for children within a local ecocultural context. Cultural pathways are made up of everyday routines of life, and routines are made up of cultural activities (bedtime; playing video games; homework; watching TV; cooking dinner; soccer practice; visiting grandma; babysitting for money). Activities are useful units for cultural analysis because they are obvious, meaningful units for parents and children to understand, they are amenable to ethnographic fieldwork and systematic observation and interviewing methods, activities are a recognized unit that often can be compared across cultures, they are an event or context that children and parents experience, and they crystallize many of the important aspects of culture. Activities are made up of values and goals; resources needed to make the activity happen; people in relationships; the tasks the activity is there to accomplish; emotions and feelings of those engaged in the activity; and a script defining the appropriate, normative way we expect to do that activity. Imagine cultural pathways themselves as consisting of cultural activities we “step” into – engage in – react to -- and walk alongside throughout life. How are children’s pathways and activities and their experiences in those pathways, changing due to global processes (Weisner, 2002)?

Ecocultural theory is based on a theory of behavior that assumes that our behavior is organized by a local, ecologically and culturally situated rationality (D’Andrade, 1986; Shore, 1996; Shweder, 1991; Strauss and Quinn, 1997). The “local situation” consists of the everyday

routines and activities of a cultural community. Parents and children use connected, schematized, shared knowledge of the cultural community to adapt and make complex decisions. This is why there is a focus on locally rational decisions, in context. Culture is the preeminent tool that children learn to use for adaptation to life. The scripts, plans, and intentions of the parents and children in any cultural community are important in understanding the patterns of behavior and actions that result. These scripts are learned through everyday sociolinguistic communication and apprenticeship (Lancy, 1996; Schieffelin and Ochs, 1987; Rogoff, 1990). Rational choice and cost-benefit theories in economics and other fields are models of the mind used to account for the effects of globalization in those fields. The model of the mind and of the human inferences leading to action in psychological anthropology and human development are much more complex and multi-determined. Human behavior is shaped, in this view, by many cognitive processes, including psychodynamic, social inference, meaning-centered, a variety of memory processes, and the events and scripts stored in mind and available for directing action (Garro, 2001; Glovich, 1991; Mattingly and Garro, 2000; Nisbett and Ross, 1980; Schacter, 1999).

#### Globalization, Economic Development, and Children's Development

Globalization includes the rapid spread of materials and products, ideas, images, capital flows, and people across spaces and borders (national or otherwise) that formerly were far more difficult if not impossible to connect. Fundamentally, globalization

...is the closer integration of the countries and peoples of the world which has been brought about by the enormous reduction of costs of transportation and communication, and the breaking down of artificial barriers to the flows of goods,

services, capital, knowledge, and (to a lesser extent) people across borders. (Stiglitz, 2002: 9).

Stiglitz suggests that the world is more “integrated” because of this process.

The economic impact of globalization not only concentrates wealth, it often puts that wealth in the hands of a particular ethnic community. Chua points out what often results (2004, pp. 16 – 17).

Contrary to what its proponents assume, free markets outside the West do not spread wealth evenly and enrich entire developing societies. Instead, they tend to concentrate glaring wealth in the hands of an “outsider” minority, generating ethnic envy and hatred among frustrated, impoverished majorities.

. . . In countries with a market-dominant minority, democratization, rather than reinforcing the market’s efficiency and wealth-producing effects, leads to powerful ethnonationalist, anti-market pressures and routinely results in confiscation, instability, authoritarian backlash, and violence.

. . . the United States should not be exporting markets in the unrestrained, laissez-faire form that the West itself has repudiated, just as it should not be promoting unrestrained, overnight majority rule – a form of democracy that the West has repudiated.

Hence globalization can also lead to the dis-integration of social communities. Globalization leads to a fragmentation of social ties that connect economic classes and ethnic communities, families, religions, and so forth. At the same time, within-group boundaries are often pushed out, and made more permeable through processes of globalization. Improved global communication and transportation have strengthened transnational communities and enhanced connections between receiving and sending countries and diasporic groups around the world

(Sutton and Chaney, 1987). Non-economic causes of migration (migration shaped by the values, beliefs and feelings which hold social structures, families, regions together) are clearly more relevant because of the ease of communication and connections (Jobes, Stinner, and Wardwell, 1992).

Often, children play an important role in the production and maintenance of the diaspora and its connection to the home community. For example, the term “parachute children” describes adolescents and youth who are sent by affluent parents in non-Western countries to go to school in the West, and while there, make contacts for their families, who remain behind in the natal country. On the other hand, when entire families immigrate, children often act as linguistic and cultural translators for their parents and work for their families in other significant ways in the new country (Suarez-Orozco, 2001; Weisner, 2001b).

Globalization is not the same thing as economic development, although those with a view of markets as free-floating, non-social forces might falsely confound the two. First of all, economic systems and markets are social systems. Economic systems are comprised of people living out cultural careers, as well as work ones, who try to make economic life fit their goals, motives, capacities, and cultural models of the world (Weisner, 2000). In the best case model, economic development, unlike globalization, is “...about transforming societies, improving the lives of the poor, enabling everyone to have a chance at success and access to health care and education” (Stiglitz, 2002:252). The United Nations assessment of the state of the world’s children, using the nation-state as the unit of analysis, and relying on general indicators of development, applies this concept to its economic definition of “human development”:

Human development is ...about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their

needs and interests....[I]t is thus about much more than economic growth, which is only a means...of enlarging people's choices. Fundamental to enlarging these choices is building human capabilities -- the range of things people can do or be in life. The most basic capabilities for human development are to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living and to be able to participate in the life of the community. Without these, many choices are simply not available, and many opportunities in life remain inaccessible. (United Nations Development Program, 2001: 9).

While global processes actually have helped many families and children attain these economic and social goals, they have certainly not everywhere led to greater social integration or economic and personal security, at least not for families and children. Ted Lewellen's definition emphasizes this "push back" -- the local and deeply personal transformation of global flows:

Contemporary globalization is the increasing flow of trade, finance, culture, ideas, and people brought about by the sophisticated technology of communications and travel and by the worldwide spread of neoliberal capitalism, and it is the local and regional adaptations and resistances against these flows. (Lewellen, 2002: 7-8)

Because globalization expands the scale and reach of change, it has multiple pathways of impact (media, work, capital flows, immigration, artifacts), that lead to increased homogeneity or heterogeneity across and within nations and continents. Some argue that global messages and markets are created and controlled by elites. Some sense its omnipresence and totalization across all domains in life. Some attribute a growing market oriented view of children, and new definitions of childhood itself, to global processes (Stephens, 1995a). The accompanying feeling is that globalization penetrates the very sense of personhood and self. The role of the Internet,

cell phones and media are central to such global penetration. Increased migration makes such global forces not only present in imagined, distant worlds, but also in real contacts from people children and parents know who have moved to such places. Globalization extends the ability to not only imagine and identify with people and places across former boundaries, but engage them in new, more direct, personal, and intimate ways. This is true even though the vast majority of the world's children are going to grow up and live fairly near their places of birth, in their current nations.

Globalization is more than an intensification of patterns of global commerce established through the emergence of Western capitalism and the industrial revolution centuries ago. It is a dramatic shift in the organization of global capitalism in place at the end of World War II (Harvey, 1990). Before the 1960's, the world economy was based on mass production and consumption and strong centralized controls (economies of scale). Today, it is moving to an economy based on "flexible accumulation" (Harvey 1990:147) where global production and the control of finances is decentralized and based more on "economies of scope". This shift has had profound implications for the organization of labor markets both within and between nation states, and led to fast paced developments of technologies of information and communication. Global processes paradoxically encourage both corporate mergers as well as the rapid proliferation of small artisanal and family owned enterprises. The economies in the United States and the United Kingdom, among others, now are driven more by "financialization" and capital allocation. When we discuss the lives of children and adolescents in the era of globalization, it is this historical period with these kinds of broad changes that we have in mind.

Whatever the extent or uniqueness of global change (and reflecting on the changes, for good or ill, that have utterly transformed, or destroyed, communities throughout history, it is

difficult to view globalization as uniquely more wrenching, or vastly better or worse, than many of those) the evidence is that national, local, and institutional patterns of life remain deeply important in the lives of children, adolescents and their families. Psychological anthropology is in the position, both theoretically and methodologically, to understand such diversity. First, evidence from broad surveys of the state of the world's children and families suggests that local, cultural and population-specific variations in the impacts of globalization are found everywhere. Psychocultural studies of childhood provide just this kind of intensive, local, holistic understanding of the lives of young people and their families. Second, psychological anthropologists focus on topics in development that both impact and are impacted by globalization: identity, self, trust and attachments, cognition and memory, acquisition and sharing of cultural knowledge (of for example parenting, childhood stages, child health), social behavior, personality, and character. Studies of globalization often overlook such topics, altogether, or do not provide the depth of ethnographic evidence needed to study them.

Anthropology also has a point of view regarding what promotes a good childhood or adolescence and what defines a good parent. Well-being is more than physical health, or the attainment of skills and competence, or of successful subsequent reproduction, important as these outcomes are. It is surely important to systematically measure such outcomes in the study of the impacts of globalization on children, using standard indicators that are widely available (Hauser, Brown, and Prosser, 1997). But these kinds of assessments are not sufficient. Well-being within a local family and community context (and this remains the context in which children experience the world and acquire well being) is the capacity of a child for engaged participation in the activities that a cultural community deems desirable, and the psychological experiences that go along with that participation. Hence well-being includes the production of cultural well-being in

children, adolescents, and youth. Understanding the impacts of globalization on the well-being of young people is an outcome that matters for children seen as whole persons. This is a central topic in the psychological anthropology of childhood.

#### Globalization, psychocultural well being, and the developing child.

It is useful to distinguish between the universal requirements for social supports and opportunities that all children and their families and caregivers need, and the locally variable ways in which communities live and how they want to raise their children. The basic, universal conditions all children and families need are important because without basic health, food and physical security, and reasonable stability in communities, no child would be in the position to follow the promise of successful pathways for development in globalizing world contexts.

In considering general indicators of child development, it is impossible to separate changes associated with globalization from the effects of population growth, or from the sheer intensification of long-standing economic and subsistence pressures, environmental degradation or the loss of land or other resources. Furthermore, we should be wary of assumption that local cultural adaptations used to be better, and have only recently been degraded by globalization or intensification or population pressures brought to communities by the rise of or disintegration of modern nation-states (Edgerton, 2000)<sup>1</sup>. The situation for children may be very different today, but it may or not have been better, by one or another criterion, in the past. The point is that changes in indicators of child and family well-being – whether improvements or not – do not necessarily show that globalization is the cause of such changes.

Without assuming causation that global processes have directly caused indicators of well-being, have the basic levels of health and well-being improved for children, adolescents and youth around the world in the past few decades as globalization becomes more ubiquitous?

Global processes seem to have been associated with absolute improvements in the universal requirements for child health and well being for many, while also leading to growing inequalities in child health and well being<sup>2</sup>. The answer also depends on which regions one is talking about and at what level of analysis. For example, there have been dramatic gains in economic growth, involvement in formal education and basic indicators of health and well-being at the national and world regional level. However, regions remain impoverished relative to others, most notably parts of Sub-Saharan Africa (the “except for” continent as Roe, 1999 phrased it) and those states that once made up the former Soviet bloc. Large numbers of children and adolescents live in war-torn or economically marginalized places (Stephens, 1995b).

Presumably, if per capita GDP increases, families and children should benefit. Between 1970 and 1999 worldwide, per capita GDP grew by 1.3% annually on average. Much of this growth was concentrated in East and South Asia where GDP growth ranged from 2.3% to 6% annually. Arab States, Latin America and the Caribbean experienced more modest growth, between 0.3% and 0.6% annually on average during the 1970-1999 period. Sub-Saharan Africa experienced an overall 1% decline in GDP annually during this 30-year period. Moreover, in the decade from 1990 to 1999, the states of Eastern Europe and other former states of the former Soviet Union actually faced a dramatic 3.4% average annual decline in per capita GDP (UNDP 2001).

There is growing income inequality between the wealthiest regions and all others, even for the regions of East Asia, the Pacific, and South Asia, which demonstrated the highest income growth between 1970 and 1999. For example, the income disparity in per capita GDP between East Asia and the Pacific (excluding Japan and South Korea) and the wealthiest industrial nations (including Japan) was about \$6000 in 1960; but it grew to \$13,000 in 1998 even after adjusting

for inflation and local cost of living differences (UNDP 2001:17). Moreover, it appears that within most nations, income inequality grew between the mid-1980's and the late 1990's (UNDP 2001:19).

As per capita income has grown, so have improvements in children's access to basic education and basic health. For example, there has been general improvement in the rates of primary school enrollment worldwide in the past few decades. By the end of the 1990's UNICEF estimates that 82% of the world's children were enrolled in primary school (UNICEF 2002). However, millions of children in low-income communities receive a poor quality education and many in developing nations stop attending after the first few primary grades (UNDP 2001). Some 190 million working children between the ages of 10 and 14 do not have access to basic education (UNICEF 2002). The gender gap that exists in many countries between girls and boys enrolled in primary school has narrowed or disappeared in recent years for all world regions except Sub-Saharan Africa where four percent fewer girls, on average, are enrolled than boys (UNDP 2001).

The under-five mortality rate also improved worldwide by 58% between 1960 and 2000, from 198 per 100,000 in 1960 to 83 per 100,000 in 2000 (UNICEF 2002). Every country for which there are data showed improvement in its under-five mortality rate during this period. Generally, the rates of improvement are better than 50% for all world regions except for sub-Saharan Africa, where the under-five mortality rate "only" improved 31%. In many African countries, rates of malnutrition actually increased between 1990 and 1999, a trend that is opposite that of the rest of the world regions, where (in aggregate) malnutrition and food insecurity declined (UNICEF 2002). "Within a framework of general improvement [in child mortality] the level of international inequality has actually grown considerably" (Sutcliffe, 2001,

chart 37). Hunger and Shame provides a vivid and close-up ethnographic account of child hunger and inequality among the Chagga of Tanzania (Howard and Millard, 1997). The current AIDS pandemic in Sub-Saharan Africa, where it was estimated in 1999 that over 1 million children between the ages of zero and fourteen are infected (UNDP 2001), will only make this disparity worse in the near term. These improvements in mortality are striking and have a large impact because of the huge differences in the age-sex structure of developed and developing nations. There are seven times more children and youth in developing countries than in the developed nations (URL: [kidscount.org](http://kidscount.org)).

The number of children and adolescents living as refugees, who participate in armed conflict, who are undomiciled/homeless, or who leave school before legal leaving age has increased dramatically in the past few decades particularly for children in low-income countries or in low-income communities within countries (Desjarlais, Eisenberg, Good, and Kleinman 1995; Panter-Brick 2002). Many of these problems are associated with rapid urbanization and high poverty levels within cities in developing countries and in areas of urban decay in wealthier industrial countries. Children who live as refugees, under conditions of war, or in the squalor of many urban ghettos have much higher rates of under-five mortality, malnutrition, and access to and/or attendance in quality educational settings. They experience a profoundly different childhood and adolescence than children in more stable, peaceful and wealthier circumstances in their own countries, much less in comparison to children in the industrialized world (Desjarlais, et al. 1995).

Children and adolescents in impoverished developmental settings are at risk for a number of developmental and mental health problems. For younger children, inadequate consumption of healthy foods and inadequate levels of emotional support and cognitive stimulation can lead to

developmental attrition, or the consistent failure to reach developmental milestones over time (Desjarlais et al., 1995). If these developmental milestones occur during sensitive periods of early childhood development, a child's failure to develop adequately can lead to life-long impairment (e.g., Schore 1994). For adolescents and youth who have lived much of their lives on the streets of over-crowded cities, refugee camps, or as parties in armed conflict, heavy involvement in unsupervised peer cultures can lead to social-behavioral problems like aggression, substance abuse, and associated mood disorders. As the basic indicators of physical health and well-being for children and adolescents have improved in recent decades, national indicators of mental health have worsened, particularly for adolescents and youth (World Health Organization, 2002a).

#### Pluralistic Childhood Pathways are Associated With Globalization

Many researchers outside of psychological anthropology certainly appreciate the importance of local and regional variations in cultural communities in shaping globalization. They are finding evidence of such variety, and calling for changes in their own disciplines to study them (Wozniak, 1993). A recent issue of *Human Development* (2002, 45, 4) is devoted to the question, "How can we study cultural aspects of human development?" A recent special issue of the *Journal of Research on Adolescence* focused entirely on globalization, societal change, and new technology. The authors, coming from psychology and sociology and based in Western nations, recognize that a "...new, more global, and pluralistic view of adolescence" is emerging. They remark that the idea of adolescence as a special, stressful stage was a western invention and that the notion is ironically now appearing in some other parts of the world, while it is disappearing elsewhere (Larson, 2002:2). There are many new "adolescences" "...refracted through distinct circumstances and cultural systems..." forming around the world, not

a single world youth culture (Larson, 2002:2). At the same time, they point out that these plural developmental pathways are shaped by some common demographic and institutional forms (e.g., expanded schooling, delayed employment, later marriage, urbanization, girls' increased participation in schooling, and common exposure to mass media).

These pluralistic child and adolescent pathways are found amongst modern, industrial nation-states as well. Shwalb and Shwalb (1996) review two+ generations of developmental research in Japan, much of it done by anthropologists, which tracks the unique influence of Japanese cultural beliefs and institutions in the midst of a modern nation state. Rothbaum, Pott, Azuma, Miyake, and Weisz (2000), Shimizu and LeVine (2001), and White (1993) show the remarkable impacts of Japanese culture on children's development. Moral reasoning, mother-child relationships, "symbiotic relational harmony" as a goal for developmental pathways and self-development (vs. "generative tension"), school and peer worlds, material culture, and adolescent experience are all at variance with U.S. and European patterns. Analogous variations are found all over the world. Yan (1999) shows the remarkable transformations that impact contemporary Chinese youth. Seymour (1999) documents uniquely Indian responses to global change across three generations of girls and mothers in Orissa<sup>31</sup>. Tudge and colleagues (1999) looked at parents and children in four industrialized, urban, literate cities (Greensboro, USA, Obninsk, Russia, Tartu, Estonia, and Suwon, Korea). They showed that socioeconomic heterogeneity within each site was important for parental beliefs about self-direction and children's own initiation of activities. In each city, they compared working and middle class families. Parents in all sites valued self-direction in their children, but all middle-class parents did so more than working class parents in each city. The point is that heterogeneity may be found at different levels of parent and child local communities (ethnic, class, neighborhood,

occupational), even under seemingly similar global influences in addition to cross-national differences.

This message that national and cultural variations are still powerful influences also is clear in recent studies of youth in the West. . Even if we focus on the United States, Canada, and Europe --those parts of the world most clearly exemplifying all the features of globalization and its various mechanisms — the evidence for heterogeneity of child and youth experience is considerable.

One way to explore this empirically is to see if there is in fact a youth and young adult world of beliefs and attitudes and practices that is very different from those of older people. If global processes have already had an overwhelming influence on youth in the West, then measures of youth attitudes and practices across as well as within nations, should show that youth are similar to each other across nations, and different from their parents' and grandparents' cohorts (both within and across nations). Such a convergence of a world youth culture should be most visible with regard to attitudes and practices which reflect a more liberal and tolerant set of political and social attitudes, or that include concerns about the environment, for example (Inglehart, 1990).

But data from the World Values Survey (WVS) show that much more than this convergence is going on. There are clear “cultural zones” that also shape social values, political institutions, and economic growth, controlling for the levels of economic wealth (GNP/capita) that vary so dramatically around the world (Inglehart, 2000). James Tilley (2002) used the WVS to compare generational differences in attitudes (political ideology and participation; religion and the role of family; work and overall life satisfaction) across 32 national samples<sup>42</sup>. Tilley finds that cultural regions shape the attitudes and practices of the young compared to older

respondents, more than does age for most items, and that gender differences are also striking for beliefs about religion (women are more religious), women's roles, and other attitudes.

...apart from political activity, cluster membership [in one of the six regional/national groups] has a greater effect [on attitudes] than does age group. . .

. Although all age-group effects are significant (apart from life satisfaction), they are generally dwarfed by the much larger effects of nationality. The young worldwide do not appear to be a coherent grouping with a common base of values.

. . . aside from life satisfaction and religious beliefs (which are dominated by [regional national group differences]), gender differences are of comparable magnitude to international effects. (2002: 252-253)

Weisner (2001c) found a similar pattern of intergenerational continuity and gender differences in an 18-year longitudinal study of children born to nonconventional and countercultural families in California. Mothers' values orientations (sex egalitarianism, importance of materialism, skepticism about authority, humanism/tolerance) measured at their child's birth were correlated with adolescents' values (and mothers' own values 18 years later). But the specific value or attitude we measured mattered as to whether adolescents were relatively higher or lower on each value compared to parents. For example, there is a secular trend for youth to be more materialistic than their parents in this particular sample (countercultural parents are relatively non-materialistic). Youth are relatively more trusting of social authority and leaders than the more skeptical and questioning parents in this sample. But girls and their mothers are substantially more committed to gender equity relative to either boys or fathers.

Harkness and Super (1996) point out significant variations in parental beliefs and infant and childcare comparing Dutch and U.S. parents. Dutch favor a calmer, more regulated daily routine and time schedule for children. They have babies who sleep longer and have more regular schedules than U.S. babies have. LeVine, Miller, and West (1988) report similar variations in their work on parental belief systems.

Youth experiences continue to depend on local and national cultural traditions instantiated in very different institutions and policies (Breen and Buchmann, 2002). Consider the transitions from adolescence to young adulthood in Italy, Sweden, Germany, and the United States (Cook and Furstenberg, 2002). Common changes are occurring in all these places (and many others around the world): expansion of education for secondary and higher levels; increased gender equity in schooling and jobs; higher unemployment rates for youth and more part-time work; more cohabitation, later marriage and childbearing ages, and lower birthrates.

But between 15 and 35, each country shows often substantial variations in how youth traverse the pathways they find. The Italian story of youth development is framed by a weaker state support system, small businesses driving the economy, more family engagement with children, and by adolescents and youth continuing to live with their parents for many years before forming a separate household. Sweden encourages a period of experimentation and tolerance among teenagers before cohabitation, marriage and jobs become settled. The Swedish state, industries and unions all provide some institutional paths to guide youth. German youth start on either a university or an apprenticeship-training track early, but German guild institutions cannot match up jobs with these youth's training, so work is often part-time and uncertain. The United States has fewer state family supports, yet offers more diverse pathways to education and jobs. The U. S. cultural and political economic ideal is one of individualistic choice, but poverty

and race and ethnic barriers lead many youth who are not on the education track, to flounder in the United States. Hence, the meaning of marriage, work, children and even age itself, varies across these countries, all of which would otherwise be grouped as similarly global, postmodern, affluent, industrialized Western nations. In other words it depends on the levels of analysis, time-scale, and sample as to whether one could conclude that common changes due to globalization are occurring in children's and youth's developmental pathways, even among the highly economically developed European nations and the U.S.

As we pointed out earlier, secular trends around the world reveal global gains in years of schooling for boys and girls, with far greater rates of increase for girls around the world. Mass schooling of children and youth is surely the most dramatic and sustained global change in children's lives and experiences of the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Yet the forms schools take depend on local beliefs about development, parental and teacher concerns, and national institutional variations. Preschool routines and activities, and their moral significance, also vary enormously (Tobin, Wu, and Davidson, 1989), and parental beliefs about the values of literacy and school success both motivate and divide communities, exacerbate tensions between boys and girls, and frustrate children who work hard at school, but without economic benefit to them or their families (Stambach, 2000). Schooling in Zambia has changed children's "life-ways" (their whole intellectual and moral development) in local communities, sometimes in harmony with local "life-ways," but more often not (Serpell, 1993). Schooling is a case where a worldwide change has had similar consequences specific to classroom education (increased literacy and numeracy, learning common national curriculum content, new peer learning situations) yet widely divergent consequences beyond the classroom in the lives of children. Schools can divide communities into elites and marginalized youth.

For instance, there is a widely replicated finding that more schooling of girls subsequently reduces fertility and child mortality, independent of husband's schooling and SES, virtually everywhere in the world. But why does this happen – what are the mechanisms in particular communities around the world that produce such a change? Do these mechanisms vary? LeVine and colleagues (LeVine and LeVine, 2001; LeVine, LeVine, and Schnell, 2001) identified four pathways that could be involved, separately or jointly in how schooling changes subsequent practices: new status aspirations of women; changes in identity and sense of empowerment; new skills; and the learning and incorporation of new models of learning and teaching. LeVine and his team then went out to study the local variations in quality and years of schooling and child rearing around the world in Nepal (where only 15% of adult women have attended school), Venezuela, Mexico (in both rural and urban settings), and Zambia. Multiple methods (ethnography, institutional observations in each community, behavioral observation, interviews, and child and maternal cognitive and language assessments) were all used to understand the meaning of schools and the impacts of education on subsequent behaviors. This is a complex story, in which all four postulated pathways have some impacts in some situations in different countries. As we have already seen is so often true, local communities influenced the ways schooling mattered for mothers and kids. However, a central finding did focus on the common effect of changing language and communicative practices:

...schools are training grounds for participation in bureaucratic organizations and ... their training is in the communicative code of such bureaucracies [e.g. decontextualized language or synoptic communication] . . .which enables a woman to use bureaucratic health and contraceptive services more effectively. (LeVine and LeVine, 2001: 267)

This research program is a model for the systematic study of globalizing institutions (schools; classrooms; child health clinics; nutritional changes; child labor) and the quite variable ways they have impacts on children at local levels. The “same” global institution (schools teaching literacy) will have a broadly similar impact in childhood and somewhat similar consequences later in development (better youth and child health; lower fertility). However, this happens through varying pathways (sociolinguistic; self-efficacy and worth; new goals and status; different interactional scripts and schemas for understanding).

If substantial variations in the values and developmental pathways of children, adolescents and youth exist even in Europe and North America, and are essential to understand the consequences of mass schooling around the world, such variations are vastly greater in the rest of the world and for other kinds of child outcomes. Leis and Hollos (1995), for example, compare two Ijo communities in the Niger Delta studied before Nigerian independence and again 25 years later. One community was relatively unacculturated to Western influences. Would intergenerational continuity from adolescence to adulthood (greater consistency between expectations for behavior of children and adults) be stronger in the less acculturated community during the 25 years of rapid change? After all, in the less acculturated community, adults and children naturally had been more homogeneous, had had more shared intergenerational beliefs and practices 25 years earlier. In fact the opposite happened. The initially more slowly changing, less-developed community had adolescents with greater discontinuity at follow-up. Kin relations and pathways to economic success differed more widely over time. Furthermore, relative changes (and feeling of relative deprivation) in wealth and modernity felt greater in the naturally less acculturated villages. Hollos and Leis (2001) went on to consider models of the self and personhood among Ijo. Self-identity continues to be defined by interdependence with

kin and ancestors, but the sense of independence and self-reliance is also very strong – made possible by shifting community supports and patrons. Although “...the postmodern tendency to view the future of anthropological studies as being the study of globalization and third-world underdevelopment has made a concern with kinship seem somewhat irrelevant”, a multidimensional model of self and identity (global, local community and individual) which includes kinship, fits their data more closely (Holloos and Leis 2001:384).

Consider another example of ethnopsychological importance: contemporary concerns over girls in the United States losing their “voice” and autonomous sense of self, concerns over various forms of abuse of girls, and girls’ worries over body image, and high rates of anorexia/bulimia. Anderson-Fye (2001) describes how adolescent girls in San Andres, a tourist-economy caye in Belize, have negotiated two ideas drawn from global media -- child abuse and slender body image -- in their lives. Far from the notion of girls losing their selves and voices at adolescence, Belizian high school girls strive to "never leave yourself". This widely-shared local ethnopsychological construct of a true and honest self is activated in times of crises, obstacles, or temptations in life. Contrary to the widespread and heterogeneous experiences of domestic violence in previous generations in Belize, abuse of girls today is increasingly rejected in that community by females. Anderson-Fye traces several reasons for these changes. Specific abuse practices are now part of a more homogeneous schema of abuse/violence among Belizean adolescents. The very naming and identification of abuse in media (TV talk shows; magazines) brought some girls to the understanding that their experiences were abusive and not “normative” in other communities around the world. Western-style body image and eating disorders also appear in TV and magazine images, but Belizean girls are satisfied with their bodies and feel attractive compared with girls around the world. Hence, few eating disorders appear in the

Belizian data. Protecting "your self" meant not depriving the body of food, and resting. Local beliefs and shared schemas, like "never leave yourself", illustrate how global media and tourism influences are mediated by ethnopsychological beliefs about the self. Such beliefs assist Belizean girls to choose paths which local and Western standards would call "healthy".

The importance of assessing fit between the global and local traditions is true for changes in children's social behavior and parental beliefs and goals for children (Weisner, 2000). In Kenya and much of sub-Saharan African, children are cared for through socially distributed systems, as opposed to exclusively parental or conjugally-organized care. Older siblings care for younger, and children are sometimes fostered, adopted, or loaned for periods to other kin, or apprenticed. Adults other than parents also care for children. This pattern can continue, become transformed, or be lost entirely due to migration, economic dislocation, parental deaths from HIV, and the dislocations of war and conflicts. The meanings, purposes, and forms of socially distributed care are changed, but the practices continue. The traits parents want to establish in their children's character that will lead to success also show this blend (Whiting, 1996). Parents identify traits useful for the school and market (confidence, inquisitiveness, cleverness, bravery, independence), but also continue to train their children for traits such as good-heartedness, respect (for parents, elders) obedience, and generosity to kin, which come from their agrarian, kin-based local world. Moral discourse about kinship and family investment shows a similar balance between respect for authority, and investments in one's own family and future (Weisner, Bradley, and Kilbride, 1997).

Suicide is another example of a global trend (suicide rates are increasing) with highly local and specific variations and implications for children and youth. For example, the World Health Organization (2002a) reports that there has been a substantial increase in suicide rates for

males between 1950 and 1995 but a more modest increase in suicide rates for females. These rates have trended younger between 1950 and 1995. The proportion of suicides committed by those between the ages of 5 and 45 had grown from 44% in 1950 to 53% in 1995 (WHO 2002b). Much of this growth has occurred among late adolescents and youth between the ages of 15 and 29. Suicide is currently among the top three leading causes of death for youth and young adults between the ages of 15 and 34 in many countries (WHO 2001).

The risk for suicide, social delinquency, homicide, and substance abuse has increased dramatically for adolescents and youth in many regions of the world (Desjarlias et al., 1995). In many places, different sub-groups of youth are most at risk for different problems. For example, older African-American boys and young men in the United States are at an extremely high risk for being victims of violent crime and firearm related homicide (United States Center for Disease Control, 2001). Older girls and young women in rural China, among Fijian Indians, and in (Western) Samoa are at unusually high risk for suicide, with rates higher than the rates for older boys and young men (Booth 1999, Phillips, Liu, and Zhang 1999). Yet in the Pacific Islands of Pohnpei and Chuuk (formerly, Truk), located in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), young men seem to be at an unusually high risk for family disturbances, substance abuse, and suicide, while young women are at an unusually low risk for these problems (Hezel 1987; Lowe 2002).

Given the apparent variation within and between communities, these health risks cannot be directly attributed to globalization and related social changes common to youth in many regions of the world. Rather a determining factor is the degree to which the changes associated with the processes of globalization (e.g., increasing access to formal education, wage markets, opportunities for migration to urban centers, and mass-produced goods) promote or obstruct a

“fit” between youth in their local contexts of everyday social life. It appears that where the fit is relatively positive, local effects of globalization on children and youth can be positive; where the fit is poor, effects can be negative with regard to impacts on child and adolescent health and well-being (Lowe, 2003; McDade, 2001).

The suicide epidemic that has ravaged youth in parts of Micronesia for the past few decades illustrates the selective, negative consequences of global change on boys. By 1994-1996, the suicide rates for adolescents and youth were 14 times higher for 15 to 19 year olds and seven times higher for 20 to 24 year olds than they were in 1964-1966 (Lowe, 2002). The rates have been extremely high even by international standards. For example, the suicide rate for 15 to 19 year olds in the FSM in 1994-1996 was 78.5 per 100000 (Lowe, 2002). As a comparison, the suicide rate for 15 to 19 year old Native Americans in 1999, who have the highest suicide rates among any ethnic group in the United States, was about 22 per 100000 (United States Center for Disease Control 2001).

In the FSM State of Chuuk, the dramatic rise in suicide has been concentrated among older boys and young men. For example, of the 173 cases of suicide reported for Chuuk between 1970 and 1985, only 11 (6%) were female suicides (Hezel, 1987). Although males commit suicide more than females worldwide, a male to female ratio of 15 to 1 is extraordinary. The sharp increase in suicide among male youth in Chuuk is also associated with reported increased substance abuse, diagnosed mental illnesses, aggression, and delinquency (Hezel, 1987; Marshall, 1987; Micronesian Seminar, 1997).

The people of Chuuk went through a century of tremendous social change as a result of colonial activities in the area and local manifestations of the global flows of people, goods, and capital between industrial nations and those in the periphery (Hezel, 1983; 1995; 2001). Social

change and globalization have impacted male and female youth similarly in their access to Western media (e.g., videos), American style education, and various aspects of Western youth culture (e.g., styles of dress and music). But these changes altered the daily routines and social relational worlds of male and female youth in fundamentally different ways. Male youth in particular have intensified their participation in the unsupervised peer group often at the expense of family obligations. Female youth, on the other hand, have intensified their participation in family activities such that their daily chores are a significant part of their daily routines, often at the expense of their participation in peer-related activities.

A youth's interests in these various settings come into conflict. Conflicts between the family and the peer group appear to be most intense (Hezel, 1987; Lowe, in press; Marshall, 1979), and are strongest for male youth because the activities that matter most for building status in the peer group often run counter to those activities that are important for maintaining their family relationships (Lowe, in press; Marshall, 1979). Older girls and young women who spend time among their peers engage in peer-related activities of much greater social acceptability.

There are also important differences in the social supports for male and female youth. Older girls' daily routines afford them more opportunities to foster emotionally supportive social relationships within the family and among adult kin. Older boys, on the other hand, who are encouraged to avoid their sisters and their homes post-puberty, generally have fewer opportunities to foster emotionally supportive relationships among their family and kin (Rubinstein, 1992; 1995).

The combination of increased potential for conflict between the various interests of male youth and poorer levels of social support place boys at greater risk for substance abuse and suicide in Chuuk (Lowe, 2003). Thus, social changes associated with globalization in Chuuk

have produced poorer “fit” or coherence, across the multiple social contexts in the everyday lives of male youth, whereas a reasonable degree of fit has been maintained in the everyday lives of female youth. These differences in the fit between male and female youth and their everyday social contexts are probably responsible for the differential rates of social problems between them.

### Enduring Questions in the Study of Young People and Globalization

Anthropology has focused on how cultural knowledge is acquired by children throughout development; how families and communities socialize children and engage (or fail to engage) children in meaningful and necessary activities and practices; and what knowledge is shared and to what extent. Our view is that these enduring concerns continue to matter to children and families, and to the scientific study of childhoods around the world. The child developmental topics important in the field for much of the past century remain important today. These include the development and meaning of gender differences; trust and attachment; cognitive development; emotions and their meaning and expression; disability and deviance; cultural competencies (social appropriacy, family obligation and task skills, literacy and numeracy) and how these are acquired and vary, the development of social behaviors such as nurturance, responsibility, aggression/dominance, and sociability; the development of self and identity throughout childhood; and others. How globalization alters these contexts, ways of thought and feeling, and outcomes later in life, are the empirical questions.

### Enduring Concerns: Children’s Voices and Effects on the Poor and Marginalized

Anthropology also always has been concerned with minorities, the poor and non-literate, and those, including children, adolescents and youth, so often powerless and marginal. To the

extent that anthropological research focuses on the impoverished and marginalized, this tradition of research, like the central developmental topics, will continue to be relevant.

We read the evidence to say that basic health, food and physical security, has gotten better for most children, adolescents and youth globally, though inequality within and between communities, nations, and regions has dramatically increased at the same time. Life remains difficult – sometimes horrifically difficult – for those young people – and parents – affected by major global disruptions, and by growing relative inequality. Many children and their parents suffer in the midst of global increasing affluence. More and more nations in a globalizing world economy now could provide the basic conditions for health, food security, safety, and other supports and opportunities to the impoverished and marginalized – yet they do not. Perhaps in past historical periods there was neither the potential nor mechanisms available for global responses to suffering. But as barriers to the flow of information and goods fall – more people can see what might be done. This has led psychological anthropologists to the study of power relationships and global processes, and the moral conditions that produce such inequality.

Scheper-Hughes (1992a; 1992b) describes on child mortality in the Northeast of Brazil with its deep poverty and the sheer inability of parents to provide for children. She describes *nervos* (a Brazilian illness construct which includes feelings of weakness, irritability, headaches, angry weeping, paralysis) as “caused by” (or simply a transformed form of) hunger and uncertainty of basic survival. She describes *nervos* as a response to poverty and an oppressive social system that should be resisted as a social fact, not glossed as a medical diagnosis. “My illness is really just my own life” as one mother says. Howard and Millard (1997) vividly describe food insecurity and malnutrition among Chagga children in Tanzania. Government, missionaries, and others have ineffectively intervened, even exacerbated these problems, for

several generations. Howard and Millard point out the complexity of cultural and historical factors that produced malnutrition, the changing class and kin hierarchies involved, and the role of wage labor migration in dividing families and communities.

Psychological anthropology has contributed to studies of other risks and afflictions of childhood and adolescence that are impacted by globalization, but which are hardly new. For instance, anthropological studies of childhood disability and deviance show somewhat improved services, greater acceptance and social integration of children with physical and cognitive disabilities in many communities. A concern for tolerance and inclusion and services for children with disabilities is gradually diffusing, in highly variable ways, around the world (Ingstad and Whyte, 1995).

Anthropologists are concerned with children at risk around the globe, including for example, children under stress from academic examinations in Japan and Korea, immigrant children, street children, and children in the squatter settlements in growing in cities around the world (Reynolds, 1989; Stephens, 1995b; Kilbride, Suda, and Njeru, 2000). Anthropologists also are concerned with the rights of children and adolescents in smaller indigenous and native cultures, and the lack of provision of basic protections for children in those communities (*Cultural Survival Quarterly*, 2000).

The sexual and physical abuse of young people around the world is a concern for anthropologists. Cultural beliefs and practices regarding appropriate discipline and treatment of children clearly do vary widely, and Western definitions of abuse are not universal. Goldstein (1998), for example, frankly describes the life world of Graca, a poor woman in a *favela* of Rio, who uses harsh physical punishment and verbal abuse, to try and discipline her children to survive in a world filled with gangs, drugs, and violence. Child discipline and punishment are

abusive by Western legal definition and norms, but fit into the stark socialization Goldstein and Graca see as required for survival. Childhood, she says, “is a privilege of the rich” (1998:393). However, repeated and unchecked physical aggression, or intrafamilial sexual relations between close kin and children are nowhere defined as normative and acceptable (Korbin, 1981). To the extent that globalization exacerbates and changes the scope and scale of war, children, adolescents and youth are not only disproportionately the victims of such wars and conflicts, they are sometimes combatants in those wars as well (Leavitt and Fox, 1993).

Many remarkable strengths of children can be seen amidst the difficult conditions of immigration, poverty, and dislocation. For example, children are often the mediators, translators of languages and cultural traditions in new immigrant communities in the United States and elsewhere, and often prove to be remarkably resilient in these roles (Orellana, Thorne, Chee, and Lam, 2001; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco, 1995). Children’s adaptive strengths and enthusiasms in their countries of origin as well as well as in the receiving communities they migrate to are remarkable (Greenfield and Cocking, 1994). Moroccan adolescents, for example, selectively use Islamic tradition (such as the importance of “social sense” or contextual sensitivity) to bridge old traditions, along with their dreams for material affluence, by using global connections through the Internet (Davis and Davis, 1989). The opportunities are stunning for new research and applied knowledge about children and global processes, based on the tradition of child and family research in local communities in psychological anthropology. After all, the children are the ones who are going to be carrying the burdens and opportunities of globalization as well as our cultural traditions, into the future.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Consider the circumstances of “abandoned” children and foundlings in Europe long before 20<sup>th</sup> century globalization. Perhaps 20 – 40 percent of newborns were abandoned in urban Rome in the first 300 years of the Christian era, and poverty long was regarded as sufficient reason for abandonment of newborns in Europe. Pope Innocent III in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, “...was horrified by the great numbers of bodies of newborns that were regularly appearing in the nets of fishermen trolling the Tiber and sought to do something to save the children or at least save their souls by ensuring that they were baptized before they died” (Kertzer, 2000:41). Perhaps half of all foundlings in homes died in infancy up to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. If the situation has improved in the past 30 years (or more likely, the plight of poor families and children changed in its forms and meanings), it is more that now we can see how to support those parents and children in ways we could not have seen before, partly due to globalization in our ideas and ability to move resources. Yet we cannot seem to do so. This is the globalizing change. Globalization has not necessarily increased child abandonment (it is almost certainly reduced) and has not produced new foundling homes where most children perish (such homes have been replaced by other institutions). The forms and scale of poverty and child suffering has changed.

<sup>2</sup>Global income inequality has never been greater than it is at the beginning of the Twenty First Century and it is growing rapidly. The richest 1 % of people in the world receives as much as the bottom 57 %. The ratio between the average income of the top 5% in the world to the bottom 5% increased from 78 to 1 in 1988 to 114 to 1 in 1993 (Milanovic 2000) and there is no indication that the growth of the gap is slowing. (*UC Atlas of Global Inequality, 2002*).

<sup>3</sup>Seymour (1999:277) sums up these changes as they have affected the feelings of self-worth and identity of girls and women in India: "...the several generations of women whom I have known in Bhubaneswar all take pride in their lives and accomplishments, however restricted these may seem to more Westernized Indians and to outsiders."

<sup>4</sup>Note that Tilley compared those under 35 who completed the survey to those over 35, so this is a generational comparison, not a child/adolescent/adult comparison. The counties in his study are European and Latin American only and grouped into six clusters (Anglo-Saxon, Nordic, Western Europe, Central Europe, Eastern Europe, Hispanic), so this is not a representative world sample, but rather mostly from the relatively affluent, literate, modern nations. And this is a non-random questionnaire sample. Given these cautions, and the survey methods used (which are likely to homogenize, not show contextual diversity and depth) the fact that cultural regions continue to differentiate youth and younger adults is all the more striking.

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