

School of Built Environment

Leaving School and Intangible Cultural Heritage

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Statement of Originality

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgment has been made.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

..... (Signed)

.....11/09/2015..... (Date)

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the position of contemporary Western expressions of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) within the current framework offered in scholarly heritage literature and the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003). Motivation for this study was driven by the realisation that current conceptualisations of ICH in available scholarly heritage literature do not account for some important ICH expressions performed by young people in a Western context. The examples of school departure rituals, performed at a local Western Australian government school, are used to identify the gaps in current Western scholarly heritage literature. The school departure rituals of the school ball, after party, leavers' jackets, muck-up day, leavers' week and graduation ceremony are included in the study. Data was collected from the participants involved in school departure rituals through interviews. The thesis identifies five areas in which school departure rituals fall outside the available heritage literature and the 2003 convention. The areas are;

- ICH is predominately performed in the developing world
- ICH provides a link with the past
- ICH is threatened by globalisation
- ICH is threatened with stagnation
- ICH is transmitted generationally

This thesis will demonstrate that current scholarly literature on ICH does not account for the vibrant, dynamic expressions of ICH performed by young people in a Western context.

Abbreviations

AHD	Authorised Heritage Discourse
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites

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Introduction

This thesis will argue, through applying the example of school departure rituals, that heritage discourse does not adequately explain Intangible Cultural Heritage [hereafter referred to as ICH] in the Western world performed by young people. Current heritage literature positions ICH as vulnerable, fragile and in need of “protection” in order to survive (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 290). Commentators argue that current heritage literature privileges marginalised folkloric customs that primarily occur in the developing world (Labadi, 2012, 130; Jacobs, 2014, 114; Smith & Waterton, 2009, 224; Smith & Akagawa, 2009, 1). ICH is assumed to be separate and concerned with non-Western and non-European culture (Labadi, 2012, 130; Jacobs, 2014; Howell, 2013). ICH is represented as rural and handcrafted (Leimgruber, 2010, 179) and predominantly performed and valued by elders in foreign locations (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009, 2; Foster, 2011, 86-87; Kearney, 2009, 65). Taking into account the current approach in heritage literature the following questions will be answered. Does current heritage discourse focus on ICH in the developing world? Is ICH under threat of dying out? Is the introduction of neo-traditions evidence that young people value and promote ICH in the Western world? Does heritage literature neglect the role of young people in the continuation of ICH, focusing instead on the role of the older generation? Are recordings of intangible traditions into material memories resulting in stagnation of ICH? Can ICH practices be enhanced by modern ways of communicating, such as social networks?

This thesis was inspired by my realisation, while working as a secondary teacher, that school departure rituals have increased in frequency and grandeur over the past decade. I observed students enthusiastically preparing and participating in school departure rituals. I noticed a substantial difference from my own personal experiences of leaving school, over two decades earlier, and the emergence of a number of additional neo-traditions. I observed school departure rituals flourishing, but did not fully understand the students’ perspective. When a researcher observes a phenomenon, but does not understand it, this is referred to as a “rich point” (Agar, 1997, 1157). I was intrigued to investigate the rich point of why school departure rituals had increased (Agar, 1997, 1161). To date no study has linked ICH with school rituals. There has been no academic interest in schools as specific agents of

ICH. As I gathered research, the disparities between how the participants viewed involvement in school departure rituals, and the way scholarly literature conceptualised ICH became apparent. I conducted this study at the Western Australian government secondary school where I teach with the full support of my school administration. The selected school has one of the largest student populations in the state, with over 1700 students, providing a multicultural, diverse student demographic.

What are School Departure Rituals?

School Departure Rituals Included in the Study

School departure rituals are performed by students in their final year of formal education. The most commonly practised school departure rituals are the school ball, the after party, leavers' jackets, muck-up day, leavers' week and graduation ceremony. These will be examined in order to demonstrate that expressions such as these are not conceptualised by current ICH commentary. There are a number of terms used for these events. The terms 'prom', 'school ball' and 'school formal' are interchangeable, as are the terms 'leavers' week' and 'schoolies' week'. A brief explanation of each of the departure rituals featured in the thesis follows.

The school ball is a formal event for which students dress in elaborate formal attire, such as gowns for females and suits for males. The evening consists of a seated meal together followed by dancing. The school ball is usually not held on school grounds. In the past the ball was held at the completion of the year, but is now held during the first half of the school year so that students are not distracted from exam preparation. Traditions surrounding the school ball include: arriving by limousine, wearing formal attire, accompanying a date and having a formal, professional photograph taken.

The after party is conducted at the completion of the school ball. The after party is a private event not organised by the school. The after party is organised completely by the students themselves. The associated traditions are to drink alcohol and stay awake all night and watch the sunrise.

Leavers' jackets are distinctive jackets designed in the school colours. The leavers' jackets can only be worn by students in their final year of schooling. The jackets

have the year of school completion written on the back with all students' names from that particular cohort listed.

Muck up day is held by the students on their final day of school. The usual practice is for students to perform transgressions against the institution of school such as wrapping the school in toilet paper or throwing eggs at teachers' cars. Concern about potential damage from school administrations has led to the introduction of a number of alternative events. Often the innovative alternatives on offer are introduced by the school, rather than the students.

Leavers' week is held the week after the completion of final Year 12 exams. Students stay in accommodation in a town or place in which they do not usually live, with a group of fellow school leavers. Local country towns in the south of Western Australia and Rottnest Island are popular. Other groups travel to Bali or the Gold Coast in Queensland. Traditions associated with leavers' week have become synonymous with excessive alcohol consumption and casual sex.

The graduation ceremony is held three to four weeks after the completion of final Year 12 exams. The students are presented with a certificate of graduation from the school principal in front of an audience of the students' parents and loved ones. The associated traditions include wearing a black graduation gown and sash.

Significance of the Study

The period of time that I have been observing school departure rituals coincides with the amount of time that has passed since the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003) was adopted. The study can neatly be placed in the period of the last decade and can consider both the noted increase of school departure rituals and the 2003 convention. This research was conducted as legislation to compulsory education in Western Australia changed. The Western Australian Education Act (1999) stipulates that from January 2014, students must stay in compulsory education until the end of the year in which the child reaches 17 years and 6 months, or until they have turned 18 years old (*Western Australian Education*

Act, 1999, Section 6, {c:ii}). This means that a larger number of students will now be staying at school for a longer period of time, resulting in a larger number of students being involved in school departure rituals than ever before. Legalisation deeming school attendance compulsory makes membership to a cohort possibly the only group experience a student may have in their lifetime. Once students have left high school, unless they voluntarily join a sport group or work social group, they might not belong to an identifiable group again.

Thesis Structure

Chapter One critically examines current literature on ICH and is organised into five sections. It focuses on the aspects of school departure rituals which do not align to current scholarly heritage literature. The first section considers the paucity of current heritage literature on the topic of ICH performed by youth in a contemporary Western context (Howell, 2013, 109; Yuan, 2014, 30). A problem with current heritage literature is that the main focus is on the bucolic and handcrafted (Leimgruber, 2010, 179), and that ICH is viewed as primarily linked to marginalised ethnic identities in the developing world (Labadi, 2012, 130). This omits a large number of ICH expressions which occur elsewhere and under vastly different cultural, social and economic conditions. The focus of the second section is on heritage literature that positions ICH as means of accessing the past (Lowenthal, 2013, 22; Vicky, 2011, 20; Smith & Waterton, 2009, 290). The 2003 UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* states that ICH provides “continuity” with the past (Article 2:1, UNESCO, 2003, 2). The third section will examine the literature on the perceived threat of globalisation to ICH. Commentators are concerned that as intercultural contacts increase, traditional languages, knowledge and customs will be lost (Lenzerini, 2011, 102; Kearney, 2009, 222; Boswell, 2008, 14). The fourth section examines heritage literature which positions the official documenting of ICH and the strict limits of the 2003 convention as posing a threat of stagnation to ICH (Labadi, 2012; Foster, 2011; Leimgruber, 2010; Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009; Kaufman, 2013). The fifth section will examine heritage literature which positions the older generation as the bearers of

ICH, who pass down ICH knowledge to the younger generation (Foster, 2011, 86-87; Junko, 2011, 86).

Chapter Two details the theoretical frameworks that were applied to the data to inform the findings of the study. An analysis of each method is carried out to determine the underpinning beliefs of each theoretical approach, and explores each framework's possible research strategies. The chapter outlines the details of the study such as how and why the example of school departure rituals and study school were chosen and provides a brief analysis of the demographic character of the school's student population. Details of the participants and how they were selected is included.

Chapter Three examines the historical background into why the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage* was adopted (UNESCO, 2003). The analysis will cover the content of the convention as well as its absences; what it *does not* say. I argue that the 2003 convention and the wider literature inadvertently represents ICH as being under threat of dying out, as being performed predominately by elders, and occurring mainly in the developing world.

Chapter Four will examine heritage literature and the UNESCO 2003 convention that positions ICH as a means of providing continuity with the past. Popular culture promotes this strand of heritage discourse, in which the past is represented as more desirable than the present or future (Lowenthal, 2013; Neiger *et al.*, 2011). Other versions of heritage are offered such as opportunities for community development (Margolies, 2011; Okpyo, 2013; Sarashima, 2013), a means of constructing group identity (Park, 2011; Palmer, 2003; Hodder, 2010; Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009) and heritage as precious and rare (Tomioka, 2012; Woonho, Hyun-Jo & Juwon, 2012). Yet it is a preoccupation with the past which emerges as prevailing, due to the strong representations of a romanticised past in popular media. The collecting and creation of material memories indicate that participants perform ICH as a future memory investment (Edwards, 1999; Ruchatz, 2008; Pietrobruno, 2013).

Chapter Five examines the perceived threat to ICH by globalisation. The fear is that some ICH will be destroyed as cultures are absorbed into one homogeneous global culture (Lenzerini, 2011; Cominelli & Greffe, 2012). By contrast, I argue that

exposure to international media has enhanced ICH, as the interviewed participants reported that they were influenced by films, television shows, songs and social media from around the world. Collective memory theory (Wertsch, 2008; Halbwachs, 1992; Kong, 2007) is applied to argue that meanings and expectations of ICH are shared amongst the group, as they are derived from common sources. The formation of a common collective memory, ICH has the capacity to provide participants with a sense of belonging. ICH has the capacity to provide commonality in a world of difference (Nuttall & Tinson, 2011; Hoffman, 2003).

Chapter Six focuses on the perceived threat of stagnation to ICH. Critics speculate that the pressure to remain authentic can result in acts of ICH stagnating (Leimgruber, 2010; Labadi, 2012; Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009; Foster, 2011). Heritage politics could effectively cause ICH to stagnate by “conservation, preservation and museumification” of ICH practices (Leimgruber 2010, 169). Communities may feel the pressure to officially formulate their ICH practices resulting in participants feeling obliged to perform in a prescribed way (Hodder, 2010, 870). A concern is that ICH may be under threat of stagnation when “preserved” and “conserved” due to the regulations imposed by an outside agency such as UNESCO (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 294).

This chapter will also consider the consequences of recording ICH. Critics argue that recording ICH can also result in stagnation (Foster, 2011; Labadi, 2012; Blake, 2009; Bortolotto, 2010). Other commentators identify that a benefit of recording ICH, in order to safeguard it, is that a potentially permanent copy is created (Woonho, Hyun-Jo & Juwon, 2012; Florido-Corral, 2013; Pietrobruno, 2013). Technology is used to record ICH and the use of technology, such as social media sites, provides a number of different interpretations of ICH. This chapter will consider both the official and unofficial representations of ICH through social media sites such as *Facebook* and *YouTube*.

Chapter Seven examines generational transmission of ICH, the strand of heritage discourse that represents ICH as predominately passed down from the older generation to the younger generation (Kearney, 2009, 65; Labadi, 2012; Leimgruber, 2010; Florido-Corral, 2013). Evidence gathered through this study will demonstrate that young people initiated and ensured that ICH expressions were performed, and

even added their own neo-traditions, rather than rely on the guidance or instruction of the older generations. The participant groups expressed ownership of certain aspects of ICH. The introduction of neo-traditions indicates the enthusiasm to continue ICH with dynamism. Chapter Seven will also consider transgressions and ownership between participant groups. Transgressions performed against the institution of school demonstrate that the younger generation challenges the status quo, and do not necessarily conform to methods promoted by the older generation.

Findings of the Study

Despite ICH being represented as a means of accessing the past, the findings of this study were that the increase in school departure rituals denotes an enthusiasm and positive belief in the future. All participant groups reported in interview that the major reason for ICH involvement was to create memories to be reflected on in their futures.

Heritage literature represents ICH as being under threat of globalisation. The findings of this study were that aspects of school departure rituals were enhanced by intercultural contact. School departure rituals provide an opportunity to find commonalities and a sense of belonging in an evolving, multicultural environment. Participants stated in interview that they were influenced and inspired to participate in ICH through exposure to international popular media and social networks. The threat of stagnation is a thread in heritage literature. Rather than being under threat of stagnation, the findings of the study were that school departure rituals are dynamic, innovative and vibrant. ICH constantly adapts and changes (Cominelli & Greffe, 2012, 247). The 2003 convention claims ICH allows for creativity stating in the preamble "... thus helping to enrich cultural diversity and human creativity" (UNESCO, 2003, 1).

Much of heritage literature represents ICH as predominately transmitted generationally, from the older generation to the younger generation (Kearney, 2009, 65; Labadi, 2012; Leimgruber, 2010; Florido-Corral, 2013). The findings of this study were that young people were the motivating force behind the continuance of ICH and transmitted the traditions within the same generation. The younger generation enhanced ICH with the addition of neo-traditions that appealed to them.

Young people believed they had ownership of some aspects of school departure rituals and engaged in organised transgressions in which they were the instigators.

Conclusion

The *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003), was analysed, and scholarly literature on the topic of ICH researched, to try to find a place for school departure rituals, but the current heritage framework was found to be lacking. School departure rituals are a valid form of ICH that has not been explored to date. This study applies cultural theory to a familiar, contemporary event that occurs within Western society. The findings of this study were that the example of school departure rituals challenges the versions of heritage promoted in scholarly heritage literature. This study will provide a vibrant, dynamic example of ICH in a contemporary Western context that is absent in current literature. This thesis addresses this gap by placing contemporary Western practices performed by young people in the foreground for examination.

Although this study was conducted in a secondary school, the findings of the study can be applied beyond the original observation range of students to youth in an urban metropolitan context beyond the original observation range of students. This study is applicable to contemporary Western ICH beyond the participants' opinions included in this study. In doing so, this study will demonstrate the ways in which ICH lived and performed by youth in a contemporary Western context falls outside the conception of ICH in the current scholarly literature and official protective mechanisms.

Chapter One: Intangible Cultural Heritage and Heritage Literature

This chapter considers the key theoretical frameworks that are currently applied to Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in scholarly heritage literature. Each thread identified in heritage literature is given a dedicated section. The threads are; that ICH occurs mainly in the developing world, that ICH provides continuity with the past, that ICH is under threat of globalisation, that ICH is under threat of stagnation and that ICH is generationally transmitted. This chapter will review the available literature on ICH to demonstrate that the conceptualisations of ICH in current heritage literature do not account for school departure rituals which are Western, performed by youth and evolving vigorously.

Many of the discussions in this study are underpinned by the concept that an implicit version of heritage is inadvertently promoted through official heritage mechanisms such as the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003) and heritage agencies. Smith and Waterton have labelled the dominant version of heritage that has emerged as the “Authorised Heritage Discourse” [hereafter referred to as AHD] (2009, 290). An awareness of the AHD is important as it informs the way heritage is approached. The key attributes of the AHD are:

A sense of permanence and continuity permeates this discourse which brings with it a need for protection of ‘authentic’ fabric from damage/destruction for the ultimate benefit of future generations (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 290).

An acknowledgement of the concept of the AHD is crucial as it affects the way heritage is understood, fostered and protected. How we speak, think and write about heritage is crucial, as it has bearing on how heritage is identified and managed (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 290). The AHD provides a frame, from which an understanding of ICH is formed. Frames, applied to make meaning are explained by O’Connor:

Framing is commonly understood to refer to schemata that are specifically socially constructed. In this context, a frame is a structure of knowledge, experience, values and meaning that is brought to a process by those who participate in it (O’Connor, 2011, 35).

The frames of understanding of ICH provided by the dominant threads that have emerged in scholarly heritage literature will now be examined.

The Conceptualisation of Cultural Heritage in Heritage Literature

The following five sub-sections will outline the key theoretical explanations of ICH that are currently represented in heritage literature. It is in these five areas the example of school departure rituals cannot be explained by the available literature.

Intangible Cultural Heritage Occurs Mainly in the non-Western World

A dominant thread of heritage literature positions ICH as mainly occurring in the developing world. The 2003 convention mentions Indigenous communities as a separate entity in the preamble “recognising that communities, in particular indigenous communities...” (UNESCO, 2003, 1). The 2003 convention explicitly separates the developing world in the statement “taking into account the special needs of developing countries” (Article 18:1, UNESCO, 2003, 8). The separating of the Indigenous and developing world indicates awareness that the 2003 convention intends to concession ICH in a non-Western context.

The *Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2008) explicitly targets the inclusion of developing countries. The operational directives states:

In its selection and promotion of safeguarding programmes, projects and activities, the Committee shall pay special attention to the needs of developing countries and to the principle of equitable geographic distribution, while strengthening South-South and North-South-South cooperation (Article 1.3:6, *Operational Directives*, UNESCO, 2008).

Many commentators support the argument that since the adoption of the 2003 convention, a focus in scholarly literature on examples of ICH from the developing world is apparent (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009; Howell, 2013; Leimgruber, 2010). It has been suggested that non-Western; non-European contexts currently

dominate studies on the topic of ICH (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 224). The 2003 convention has been identified as;

An attempt to acknowledge and privilege non-Western manifestations of practices of heritage (Smith & Akagawa, 2009, 1).

One fault that has been identified in the current study of ICH is that the main focus is on the rural, common and handcrafted (Leimgruber, 2010, 179). Leimgruber writes of the way in which ICH is represented as belonging in the sphere of the undeveloped:

...the implementation of intangible cultural heritage policy depends upon a similar dividing line, one that since the beginning of the modern era has been drawn between rural and urban, common and elite, handicraft and industry. Intangible cultural heritage is assumed to belong virtually exclusively to the former (Leimgruber, 2010, 179).

The belief that official recognition of ICH appears to focus on the folkloric is reflected in Jacob's statement:

Where are the electric guitars and synthesizers instead of handmade ukuleles, banjos and *angklang*? (Jacobs, 2014, 114).

The concern of experts is that due to the concentrated effort to recognise ICH practices in non-Western societies, valid ICH practices in Western countries are not being acknowledged (Howell, 2013, 105; Jacobs, 2014, 113). As a result of the position of the British Government's decision not to ratify the 2003 convention; examples of ICH in Britain are not officially validated by being included on UNESCO's list (Howell, 2013, 105). UNESCO's convention has allowed non-Western examples of ICH to flourish; however, it has been at the cost of Western ICH expressions which are now underrepresented (Howell, 2013, 105).

Jacobs (2014) also argues that the 2003 convention implicitly privileges non-European expressions of ICH. Apart from the formal rules applied to inclusion on UNESCO's safeguarding list, implicit criteria such as "no electricity, no nuclear energy or even steam power" are used which Jacobs claims aids traditional

unpowered examples of ICH from the developing world being treated in preference to industrialised Western ICH (2014, 113). “References to non-European aristocracy and other special groups were embraced” and that ICH invented and cultivated in “Asian and African countries are no problem and were accepted on the *Representative List*” (Jacobs, 2014, 114). This is in direct opposition to the manner in which European expressions of ICH have been considered for safeguarding which were considered “more problematic” (Jacobs, 2014, 114). Jacobs explains:

For the UNESCO list, both popular and court/elite forms of culture from outside Europe seem to qualify, but for Europe, only expressions of popular culture are listed (Jacobs, 2014, 100).

In her critique of the 2003 convention, Labadi (2013) holds a similar view, writing that ICH appears to be positioned as primarily linked to marginalised ethnic identity in the developing world. ICH is represented as being:

... old, pre-industrial, unchanging or relatively stable over time, related to an ethnic identity (especially a marginalized or non-Western one) and regionally specific (Labadi, 2013, 130).

It was pressure from the developing world that prompted UNESCO to take the initiative to introduce the 2003 convention (Aikawa-Faure, 2009, 14). Other experts claim that the Western attitude towards intangible heritage is that it is set apart and assumed to deal only with non-Western and non-European culture (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 289; Jacobs, 2014; Howell, 2013). ICH from the developing world is considered as “subversions of dominant, canonical European norms” (Labadi, 2013, 4) and the concept of ICH implicitly evokes a separation between “traditional societies and an unspecified other” (Leimgruber, 2010, 179). Others support the argument saying that ICH customs and traditions are often positioned as “exotic and for the performance of a Western audience” (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009, 1). Labadi argues “The 2003 convention is thus too often associated with non-Western countries” (2013, 131).

Other commentators have critiqued the current focus in heritage literature of ICH in the developing world, arguing that the adoption of the 2003 convention was ethically

driven to rebalance ‘world’ heritage which favoured a Western view and to overcome the perceived exclusions and shortcomings of a mainly Eurocentric paradigm of heritage (Rudolf & Raymond. 2013, 164; Howell, 2013, 105). Adopting the 2003 convention attempted to deal with the historic preference shown for Western built environments (Labadi, 2013, 130). It was hoped that the adoption of the 2003 convention would expand the concept of heritage from the dominance of built material heritage that favoured Western sites and places (Leimgruber, 2010, 167).

The intention of the 2003 convention was to ensure that all displays of ICH were regarded as equally valuable to the community in which they are performed (Kearney, 2009; Labadi, 2013). It was hoped the convention would provide equity;

No hierarchy can be assigned to distinguish one community’s intangible heritage as better, more valuable, more important or more interesting than the heritage of any other community. To every community or group, each element of its intangible heritage has value that cannot be compared to other elements of other communities’ heritage: each is equally valuable, in itself (Labadi, 2013, 138).

Aspirations that the 2003 convention would aid in the creation of a more balanced global representation of heritage have both critics and supporters. In support of a greater number of examples of ICH from the developing world, Blake (2009) argues that the convention may allow for more of a crucial role for the developing countries in the representation of ICH. One goal of the convention was to represent living traditions and give greater public recognition and legitimacy to practices and values in the mainly marginalised developing world (Labadi, 2013, 129). The 2003 convention has achieved the objective of representing an alternative to a mainly Western view of heritage, and a greater number of practices performed in non-European settings have been awarded recognition (Foster, 2011; Margolies, 2011). It is appropriate for the 2003 convention to be aware of, and perhaps focus on, forms of ICH in the developing world if they are in need of safeguarding. Arizpe is positive about the increase in representations of ICH from developing countries and recommends that it has the capacity to foster broader interest in research on the topic of ICH in a developing world context (2013, xv).

Intangible Cultural Heritage Provides Continuity with the Past

A thread in heritage literature positions ICH as providing a link with the past. The discourse of heritage is peppered with words such as remember, memory and traditional that all refer to what has gone. The notion of the link to the past is evident in the statement that ICH expressions are “performances of commemoration and remembering” (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 293). The *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003) highlights the link with the past by stating that ICH is “recreated ...in response to a community’s history” and provides “continuity” (UNESCO, 2003, 2). A reason given to conserve heritage places in the *Burra Charter* is that they provide a connection to the past;

Places of cultural significance enrich people’s lives, often providing a deep and inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape, to the past and to lived experiences (Australia ICOMOS *Burra Charter*, 1999, 1).

Experts validate ICH practices due to the connection they provide to the past. A theme in heritage discourse, employed to legitimise ICH, is that it provides continuity with tradition and the past (Bryan, 2000, 155). Cultural identity is created through “recall of historical experiences and cultural traditions” (Burrowes, 2013, 38). Cominelli and Greffe refer to ICH as the “bridge between past and present” (2012, 245). Current heritage literature focuses either on replicating ICH as closely as possible to ways and methods from the past, or maintaining existing ICH (Okpyo, 2013; Bozanic & Buljubasic, 2012; Carbonell, 2012). The connection with the past is a feature of the AHD which promotes “A sense of permanence and continuity” (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 290). The theme of continuity is repeated in Hobsbawm and Ranger’s argument that the connection with the past is utilised to validate more recently introduced customs, as traditions “implies continuity with the past” (1983, 5).

Heritage literature writers have applied the link with the past to legitimise and increase the value of ICH practices. The link with the past is utilised to add value to the tradition of silk weaving stating it has “long been produced” in the area (Okpyo, 2013, 73). The link with the past for “more than a millennium” is utilised to reinforce

that silk weaving is a valuable practice (Okpyo, 2013, 72). The connection with the past is used to legitimise the tradition of tuna trapping with Florido-Corral arguing that the custom “is an ancient practice – rooted in the Phoenician/Punic/Roman period” (2013, 56). The longevity of a connection with the past is used to provide credibility with Hang also referring to an ICH practice as “ancient” (2014, 19). Soma and Sukhee refer to Falconry as “centuries old” (2014, 136). The intention is not to deny that many ICH practices have been performed over a long period of time, but rather the acknowledgment that the connection with the past is used to argue the importance and validity of the practice. The legitimising of ICH practices through the connection with the past has not gone unnoticed. The 2003 convention has been utilised “to strengthen the image of ancient, deeply rooted practices” (Leimgruber, 2010, 173).

Heritage is represented in popular culture as a means of accessing an idealised past (Lowenthal, 2013; Neiger *et al.*, 2011; Vicky, 2011). The pressure to favour the past has increased with many forms of media promoting and idealising bygone days (Lowenthal, 2013, 34). Popular culture glorifies the past through advertising, television shows, cinema, vintage cars and retro music that represent the past as a much better time (Lowenthal, 2013, 31). Popular culture, especially media forms, has a powerful effect as they represent imaginary locations as being real (Frosh, 2011, 118). Viewers are directed to view idealised representations of the past as a reality of the past. Viewers experience a unifying memory of the past through what Frosh refers to as the “fiction of television” (2011, 129).

The past is ever increasingly used as a marketing tool to encourage consumers to reflect on the past in a positive way (Lowenthal, 2012, 2013; Neiger *et al.*, 2011; Frosh, 2011). The past is represented in popular culture as;

... times of lost purity and simplicity, lapsed immediacy and certitude, in some Golden Age of classical serenity, Christian faith, pastoral plenitude, or childhood innocence. Sojourning in the past seems preferable to living in the present (Lowenthal, 2012, 2).

Boswell (2008) also considers the past to be idealised as a safe place in which people are encouraged by the media and popular culture to reflect on as a more positive

time. Belonging and security are promoted as components of the past that hold appeal to people as a sanctuary from modern life:

If we can look to the past, and preserve memories of belonging and security, we are better able to face the uncertainty of the present (Boswell, 2008, 18).

The representation of the past as a more pleasant and joyful place is increasingly depicted in popular culture through the arts and media to encourage viewers to reflect on the past in a positive way (Lowenthal, 2013, 29). The memories of the past a community selects to remember are idealised in the media as they favour the “broad over the narrow... the simple over the complex” (Zelizer, 2011, 28). The media is then able to represent the past as a uniform idealised package in a positive light. An idealised version of the past is utilised by the media to create an “irresistible past” that is represented as a familiar, shared and common past that serves to bond a community together (Edy, 2011, 41). The results are a preference for what has gone, rather than what is to be, where the past is represented in the media and popular culture as a happier and more fulfilling time than the present.

Commentators have argued the reasons they believe the past is idealised in popular culture. Memories of the past may be selected to respond to society’s present needs, so viewing the past as simpler, happier times serves the community (Vintitzky-Seroussi, 2011, 51). The increased presence of nostalgia in popular culture may be due to anxiety about the future:

Many take refuge in the past as an antidote to present disappointments and future fears (Lowenthal, 2012, 2).

Idealising of the past may also be as a result of the search for “familiarity and stability” in a rapidly changing world (Leimgruber, 2010, 172).

In contrast to this thread of heritage literature that argues that ICH is performed as a means of accessing the past, this study found that the participants have a strong sense of the future when performing ICH. Evidence that the participants intend to remember ICH involvement in their futures, is the creation of material memories. Theories of material memories are used to make sense of the participants’ awareness of the future when being involved in ICH expressions. Material memories are

physical items connected to an ICH expression that are retained, such as photographs, objects or mementos. Material memories are retained for the dedicated purpose of remembering (Edwards, 1999, 222; Batchen, 2004, 36; Willumson, 2004, 65). The collecting and creation of material memories indicate that participants perform ICH as a future memory investment (Ruchatz, 2008; Pietrobruno, 2013). The very act of keeping mementos, photographs and souvenirs is “an act of faith in the future” (Edwards, 1999, 222). It is in the act of keeping and the manner in which objects and material memories are conserved, with great care, which grants them their significance (Pitelka, 2008, 3).

The retained item becomes significant due to the associated meanings connected with the ICH event (De Caroli, 2008, 21; Monks, 2013, 53; Hepburn, 2010, 5). The material memory must be perceived as authentic or genuine in the emotional sense in order to become valuable to the participant (Pearce, 1995, 291). The presence of the original is the prerequisite to the concept of authenticity (Benjamin, 1992, 29). The item becomes precious due to association with the moods and emotions felt at the time of ICH event (Maines & Glynn, 1993, 10). The item becomes precious as it is consecrated in time and space with the moods and emotions felt at the time of the ICH event (Edwards & Hart, 2004; Monks, 2012; Freund & Thiessen, 2011, 28; Tinkler, 2011, 48). Material memories connected to an event of significance are able to evoke “reverence and awe” in the recall of a memory (Cameron & Gatewood, 2004, 67). The term “numinous” is applied to such an experience (Cameron & Gatewood, 2004, 57). A numinous experience will result in the person in the presence of a material memory to feel a strong emotional sense of reverence out of respect for the memory that the object stimulates (Cameron & Gatewood, 2004). The numinous experience is a result of the memories and emotions the material memory is connected to, rather than the object itself.

Objects become a way of accessing, or activating, the past (Kwint, 1999, 2; Batchen, 2004, 37). Material memories act as triggers of memory (Freund & Thomson, 2011; LaTour *et al.*, 2010). Material memories stimulate memory as they are associated with contexts beyond their own physical form (Edwards & Hart, 2004, 2). This thesis will demonstrate that the creation of material memories is proof that ICH is

sometimes performed with a consciousness of the future, rather than a link to the past.

Intangible Cultural Heritage is Under Threat of Globalisation

A common thread in heritage literature is the threat to ICH of globalisation. Globalisation is the belief that influences of other cultures deplete and subjugate the original culture. Modern lifestyles around the world have interfered with contact between people, resulting in a detrimental effect on the transmission of ICH (Carbonell, 2012, 65). The concern of experts is that ICH expressions are:

...threatened with extinction as a result of the homogenising forces of globalisation, or the rise of one mass culture (Stefano, Davis & Corsane, 2012, 1).

The effects of globalisation on heritage have attracted much scholarly attention, including a dedicated book on the topic (Labadi & Long, 2010). Globalisation is identified as a threat to ICH in the 2003 convention. The convention states in the preamble:

Recognizing that the processes of globalization and social transformation, alongside the conditions they create for renewed dialogue among communities, also give rise, as does the phenomenon of intolerance, to grave threats of deterioration, disappearance and destruction of the intangible cultural heritage, in particular owing to a lack of resources for safeguarding such heritage (UNESCO, 2003, 1).

A primary reason the convention was adopted was to ensure that ICH expressions are protected from the effects of globalisation as Kurin argues:

The convention aims to ensure the survival and vitality of the world's living local, national, and regional cultural heritage in the face of increasing globalisation and its perceived homogenising effects on culture (Kurin, 2006, 10).

Lenzerini shares a similar view to Kurin saying that the resulting effects of globalisation will result in a uniform culture with the loss of diversity. Lenzerini explains his concerns about globalisation in the argument:

... characteristic of our contemporary world, in the context of which the cultural archetypes and interests of dominant societies globalize, to the prejudice of minority cultures, leading to cultural hegemony and uniformity at the local, national, regional, and international level.

Such a process will eventually lead to the crystallization of uniform and stereotyped cultural models and to the contextual mortification of the value of cultural diversity (Lenzerini, 2011, 103).

The concern of commentators is that as intercultural contacts increase, traditional languages, knowledge and customs will be lost. Heritage experts argue that unless protected, half the world's languages will be lost completely by the end of this century due to globalisation (Woonho, Hyun-Jo & Juwon, 2012, 115). A concern is that international cultural contact will result in loss of identity. To avoid cultural homogeneity, heritage policies should value a more "localised" format that allows for Indigenous communities' views (Kearney, 2009, 221). The effects of globalisation can compromise minority groups' access to intellectual property and ownership (Kearney, 2009, 222). There is concern that the influence of globalisation has resulted in a loss of traditional vocations, often replaced by employment in tourism, and the homogenisation of diverse cultures (Boswell, 2008, 14). Local institutions may lose their freedom and uniqueness, in an attempt to conform to external standards of heritage, and international influence (Boswell, 2008, 14).

Despite the 2003 convention identifying globalisation as a possible threat, resulting in "deterioration, disappearance and destruction" of ICH, commentators argue UNESCO may function as a globalising factor. The "bureaucratic apparatus" of UNESCO itself, with the promotion of common cultural, educational and scientific standards on a global scale, acts as a globalising force (Bortolotto, 2010, 97). Askew (2010) has similar concerns that UNESCO could be viewed as part of the globalising process considering that UNESCO performs a unifying role as the:

... global-level instrument which mobilises resources, reproduces dominant arguments and rationales, establishes agendas and policies and dispenses status surrounding the conservation and preservation of the thing called 'heritage' (Askew, 2010, 22).

A positive that has been identified is that intercultural connections allow for a number of interpretations and versions of ICH to develop and have the capacity to enhance ICH (Boswell, 2008; Lenzerini, 2011). Although Lenzerini (2011) has identified globalisation as the main source of cultural destruction, he appreciates that ICH is in a constant state of change and recreation according to historical and social factors. The philosophy behind the adoption of the 2003 convention was to promote

and encourage the spread of knowledge, appreciation and understanding of other cultures, therefore increasing the opportunity for cross-cultural dialogue (Bortolotto, 2010, 97). The 2003 convention acknowledges in the preamble that globalisation and social transformation allow for renewed dialogue:

Recognizing that the processes of globalization and social transformation, alongside the conditions they create for renewed dialogue among communities... (UNESCO, 2003, 1).

A positive aspect of migration of people to Western countries that were previously imagined as mono-cultural has resulted in “super-diversification” and a greater sense of acceptance (Boswell, 2008, 18).

The media is often cited as a vehicle through which the effects of globalisation are rapidly dispersed; however, not all commentators have reacted negatively regarding the media and its effect on ICH. Marschall offers the example of *eNanda*, an interactive community website which was able to digitally record, share and promote ICH in South Africa (2014, 121). The popular media can often be easily accessed and utilised to positively disperse examples of ICH (Pietrobruno, 2013; Yuan, 2014; Park, 2014; El-Aswad, 2014). Due to international possibilities, as well as the distribution of information that reaches a large audience, the media is an active shaper of cultural practices (Leimgruber, 2010, 180; Zelizer, 2011, 30; Vintitzky-Seroussi, 2011, 48). Leimgruber (2010) argues that cultural transmission cannot be understood without taking into account the role of the media.

One area in which commentators identify globalisation can have a positive effect is through the use of technology. The application of technology has the capacity to enhance and revitalise ICH expressions (Leimgruber, 2010, 180). Recreating existing ICH to include modern additions, while retaining the original meaning, can appeal to a larger and sometimes new audience (Yuan, 2014, 28). Participants are able to access a variety of global representations via different media formats, through social networking sites such as *YouTube* and *Facebook* as well as films and television (Harper, 2008; Neiger *et al.*, 2011). Both Park (2014) and El-Aswad (2014) promote the use of new digital devices and sites to provide a new paradigm for safeguarding, recording and dispersing ICH to new and larger audiences.

New technologies can also enhance the accessibility of recorded ICH (Ruchtz, 2008). The convenience of accessing online inventories has been raised by Park (2014) and Marschall (2014). The *Korean Cultural Heritage Administration* recently initiated a digital inventory called *Ichpedia* which provides a good example of innovative application of ICH inventories that can reach a wider audience (Park, 2014, 71).

The use of technology is not unilaterally passive, but is actively utilised by participants to extend their ICH experience, and create their own interpretations (Leimgruber, 2010, 180). Participants are able to present their own interpretation of ICH informally through social websites, providing a number of versions of the expressions (Pietrobruno (b), 2013, 743). The user-generated facility offered by *YouTube*, results in both an official and unofficial archive of ICH expressions to develop, which can be viewed and interpreted by a potentially large audience (Pietrobruno (b), 2013, 745). Frosh argues that imagined memories can be created through the media, and can be recalled and applied to the viewers' realities (2011, 126). Frosh's argument makes recorded and viewed ICH as relevant and active to the viewer as being a participant. The media has the capacity to open lines of communication in which "traditions are continued and new cultural forms arise" (Leimgruber, 2010, 180). The mass media serves as a site from which the dominant collective memory can reach a wider audience (Neiger *et al.*, 2011, 6; Weedon & Jordan, 2012, 145).

This study applies collective memory theory to explain that ICH can be enhanced by intercultural connections. ICH involvement allows for a sense of commonality in a diverse population. Contributing to a shared experience through ICH allows for connections and camaraderie between people to develop. The unifying capacity of ICH practices have been described as "the sacred ceremony that draws people together in fellowship and commonality" (Underwood *et al.*, 2011, 199) and "the glue that holds social groups together" (Jones, 2013, 471).

Collective memory is a phenomenon that can be interpreted differently depending on the varying discipline in which it is examined. This study is suited to the interpretation based on the ideas and concepts of a sociocultural approach which states that collective memory is formed under the influence of social phenomena, rather than a psychological base. Halbwachs argues "the mind reconstructs its

memories under the pressure of society” (1992, 51, [translated from *Les cadres sociaux de la memoire*, 1952]). Halbwachs is credited with initiating work in the area, and it is he who formalised and named the practice of collective memory. His work has had an overarching influence on the topic and still informs contemporary work in the field today. Halbwachs’ views on the social construction of memory have been challenged by Blondel, a psychiatrist, who claims that Halbwachs emphasises the social construction of memory at the expense of the somatic aspects of the mind’s function (Blondel, 2011, 156). Halbwachs’ emphasis on the social construction of memory has also been criticised by Bloch who claims that Halbwachs neglects to adequately explain memory transmission (Bloch, 2011, 153). Despite these considerations, Halbwachs’ work on the formation of a group belief and the development of a dominant collective memory that is shared amongst the group membership is useful in the study of ICH experience.

This study draws on the work on collective memory of Wertsch (2000, 2002, 2008) who argues that collective memory is textually mediated memory. Exposure to textual resources is the primary method of dissemination of information promoting a dominant collective memory (Wertsch, 2002). Of the influence that textual resources have on the development of collective memory Wertsch argues:

Instead of being grounded in direct, immediate experience of events, the sort of collective memory at issue in this case is what I shall term “textually mediated.” Specifically, it is based on “textual resources” provided by others – narratives that stand in, or mediate, between the events and our understanding of them (Wertsch, 2002, 5).

Common understandings of ICH meanings are shared amongst the group because they are derived from shared sources. It is through the shared sources that a commonly understood collective memory of the ICH event develops (Wertsch, 2002, Halbwachs, 1992). The sharing of textual resources, such as film, narratives and social media aids in the development of a collective memory (Wertsch, 2002; Halbwachs, 1992; Driscoll, 2011, 86; Weedon & Jordan, 2012; Vintitzky-Seroussi, 2011; Donald, 2011; Erll, 2008). Intercultural connections, especially via popular media, inform the collective memory, which allows participants to share in a common experience. Halbwachs (1992) argues that participants form their expectations and beliefs from the information that is derived from membership

affiliation. The collective memory of the group is developed through the ‘stories’ the group tell each other. I argue that the shared understanding of the collective memory grants the students a sense of commonality and belonging needed to build cohesion in a diverse environment.

Intangible Cultural Heritage is Under Threat of Stagnation

A common thread in heritage literature positions ICH as being under danger of stagnation. Pressure from outside heritage agencies may lead to stagnation of ICH (Labadi, 2012; Foster, 2011; Leimgruber, 2010; Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009; Kaufman, 2013). The concern of critics is that UNESCO and official heritage bodies are in a position to apply judgement on the validity of ICH expressions. A consideration is that external standards are imposed upon local institutions in regard to worthiness of ICH practices (Boswell, 2008, 14). The fault of heritage conservation and preservation practices is that they are mainly derived from Western scholarship and imposed from an external official body onto ICH expressions (Hodder, 2010, 862). Debates centre on communities’ fears that their ICH could lose “its originality, uniqueness, or exceptional universal value” under the scrutiny of outside judgement (Leimgruber, 2010, 169). Boswell even questions UNESCO’s heritage management ethos and the willingness to accept alternative interpretations of heritage (Boswell, 2008, 81). To be officially recognised, ICH must be deemed authentic by an outside source:

Admission to the list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity strongly depends on the duality of “authentic” versus “inauthentic” heritage forms (Leimgruber, 2010, 169).

The value of an ICH practice is understood through how well the practice aligns with the described criteria set out by UNESCO (Smith & Akagawa, 2009, 4).

Commentators have expressed concern that once placed on UNESCO’s lists and taken out of its sociocultural context, rather than being safeguarded, ICH expressions may lose their meaning (Foster, 2011; Leimgruber, 2010). ICH stagnating under official control is explained by Leimgruber:

Instead, they become museumized and defunctionalized forms devoid of any identity-building meaning for the practitioners, though perhaps offering an added tourist value (Leimgruber 2010, 178).

Scholars have pondered over how to protect ICH without reducing it to a mere representation (Lenzerini, 2011; Foster, 2011; Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009).

Other commentators support the notion that ICH should have an organised and official standard. ICH follows precedence and to be considered genuine and authentic the procedure must be followed in the prescribed way (Husken, 2007, 273). Tomioka (2012) uses the example of an altered traditional dance, to highlight that once changed; an ICH event loses its authenticity. The altered dances lack the meaning of the original dances. Tomioka refers to the remaining women who have knowledge of the dance in its entirety as “purists” (2012, 85).

Stagnation through ownership being removed from the practising community has been raised as an issue. There is no option for negotiating heritage identification or management in the 2003 convention for ethnic minorities as control is under Nation States (Boswell, 2008, 22). It may be problematic for Indigenous communities, especially considering the historical link to colonisation, to accept the discourse of heritage from an outside agency such as UNESCO (Boswell, 2008, 13). A concern that once included on official safeguarding lists, the ICH practice in a sense becomes the property of UNSECO has been expressed (Foster, 2011, 63). Participants surrender their ownership of the practice and may be obliged to perform in an imposed way (Foster, 2011; Hodder, 2010). Participants claiming ownership of heritage practices can result in the claimants becoming trapped (Hodder, 2010). Heritage managers may insist that people perform their prescribed heritage for extended periods of time, produce traditional crafts and live in traditional housing (Hodder, 2010, 870). The ICH practice is then in danger of stagnating and becoming “frozen” in time (Foster, 2011, 83; Labadi, 2012, 115, 127).

Recording ICH, and therefore altering it from intangible to tangible, has also been identified as a practice that may result in ICH expressions stagnating. The officially controlled version of an ICH expression promoted by UNESCO has the capacity to freeze the event:

UNESCO *YouTube* videos posted on the Representative List freeze intangible heritage (Pietrobruno (b), 2013, 743).

The possibility that recording ICH practices stagnates an ICH practice and denies it the opportunity to adapt and change has been debated by a number of experts (Leimgruber, 2010; Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009; Foster, 2011). Once an ICH practice has been recorded it becomes a standard to how the ICH practice should proceed from there on. Leimgruber (2010) argues this denies the ICH the opportunity to develop and adapt. Transference from the intangible to the tangible recording preserves the event, but it also traps it in a moment in time. The fear is that active, living ICH will stagnate once recorded. As a result of recording, examples of ICH could suffer “museumification (if not mummification)” in the documentation process (Leimgruber, 2010, 169). On the other hand, the use of new medias, and user applied inclusions on social media, could possibly “counter the fossilising of representations” of ICH practices (Pietrobruno (b), 2013, 744).

The findings of this study were that ICH has the capacity to function as a means of innovation and creativity. Cominelli and Greffe (2012) have identified that ICH nourishes creativity and allows for innovation. Data generated through interviews and research indicated that rather than school departure rituals stagnating, participants reported that they utilised ICH involvement to allow for social innovation. ICH involvement allowed for social mobility and change of social status, through transformation and transition (Turner, 1967; Hoffman, 2003; Hoffman, 2004; Driscoll, 2011; Lynch, 2001). A significant goal many students are working towards achieving through school departure ritual involvement is the status change from adolescent to young adult (Hoffman, 2003, 24). Adolescence is often viewed as a long period of transition in which established institutions are relied upon to provide guidance and discipline (Driscoll, 2011, 66).

ICH is innovative, as it reacts to changes, and also creative, as it is applied to new uses and practices (Cominelli & Greffe, 2012, 248). Yuan (2014) uses the example of ICH which has been creatively revitalised with the use of current music and visual stimuli to appeal to a new, younger audience, while retaining the original values. Margolies (2011) provides the example of the innovation of teaching Conjunto music

outside of the traditional family model, resulting in a revitalised and renewed interest by the younger generation. El-Aswad has also provided an example of enhancing ICH by innovation via social media, and involvement of mobile phones to enhance effective communication that resulted in the revitalisation of ICH (2014, 157).

The new uses of technology, such as *Facebook*, *YouTube* and mobile phone applications have been identified as a means of creatively revitalising ICH as well as reaching alternative audiences. ICH participants are able to present their personal versions of ICH via social media. Social media has the potential to present and safeguard multiple versions of ICH (Pietrobruno (a), 2013, 15). New media does not result in the destruction of ICH, but can aid in developing ICH, as it can appeal to visual, audio and “can also serve as a source of inspiration and revitalization” (Leimgruber, 2010, 180).

Intangible Cultural Heritage is Transmitted Generationally

A thread in heritage literature positions ICH as passed down from the older generation to the younger generation. A “central principle” of ICH is that it is transmitted from generation to generation (Labadi, 2013, 141). A primary reason given to conserve heritage is so that it can be continued by the next generation. The *Burra Charter* states “These places of cultural significance must be conserved for present and future generations” (ICOMOS *Burra Charter*, 1999, 1). Smith and Waterton argue that the AHD is built on a sense of continuity and that ICH must be protected “for the ultimate benefit of future generations” (2009, 290). The 2003 convention states the method of ICH transmission is generational:

...this intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation... (Article 2:1, UNESCO, 2003, 2).

The concept of heritage is perceived as having been something that “carries a legacy of values and cultural assets that have been handed down the generations unchanged” and “repeated again and again” (Florido-Corral, 2013, 58-59). It is claimed that the 2003 convention helps to keep ICH viable and therefore continued to be “transmitted from generation to generation” (Labadi, 2013, 139). Boswell states that UNESCO describes heritage as “What we pass on to future generations” (2008, 11). ICH is

positioned as a practice that relies on traditional knowledge passed from “one generation to the next for hundreds of years” (Bozanic & Buljubasic, 2012, 18).

Heritage literature represents the older generation as the “bearers” of ICH knowledge (Lenzerini, 2011, 102; Labadi, 2012, 132). The older generation initiates and oversees the younger generation, eventually handing on the responsibility to them as they gain more experience (Foster, 2011, 86-87; Junko, 2011, 86). El-Aswad provides an example of the dominant view of generation transmission in his definition below:

Traditional culture is informally learned, socially circulated, passed down from generation to generation (El-Aswad, 2014, 152).

The continuation of ICH is viewed in heritage literature as being dependent on generational transmission. The belief is that the survival of ICH depends on a community’s desire and motivation to practise, perform and transmit practices from one generation to another (Labadi, 2012, 139). Labadi’s hope is that perhaps inclusion on an official list, such as UNESCO’s, could motivate a community into generational transmission:

... more interested in these manifestations and that they keep them viable through learning these traditions and passing them on to their own children (Labadi, 2013, 139).

Concern that young people are not interested in the continuation of ICH has been raised in the 2003 convention, and literature. The *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003) gives the impression that young people are not interested, or aware of ICH. The convention states:

Considering the need to build greater awareness, especially among the younger generations, of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage and of its safeguarding (UNESCO, 2003, 1).

Revealingly, Labadi, perhaps inadvertently, assumes that the younger generation is disinterested in the continuation of ICH by arguing:

It is also a way to ensure that the younger generation becomes more interested in these manifestations and that they keep them viable... (Labadi, 2013, 139).

The severing of generational transmission has been cited as a possible threat to the future of ICH. Heritage literature surmises that ICH is in danger of disappearing if the younger generation refuses, or does not have the opportunity, to be in contact with the older generation. Hickey uses the example of migration into another culture, which hinders the younger generation from continuing on with traditions (2012, 39). An example offered is that of traditional silk weaving in Japan now being in decline due to the younger generation choosing alternative employment, rather than continuing the family tradition (Okpyo, 2013, 77). Another example is that traditionally young people learned Conjunto music from their families, or community elders; however migration for employment has now detached the generational connection (Margolies, 2011, 27). Heritage literature asserts that if transmission between generations can not take place, ICH that may have been practised for generations is at risk of being lost forever (Junko, 2011, 87).

This study examines theories of neo-traditions and transgressions to demonstrate that the younger generation do not always depend on the older generation to pass down ICH. Theories of neo-traditions (Husken, 2007, 274; Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983; Kong, 2007; Park, 2011; Neeman & Rubin, 2009), carnivalesque (Bakhtin, 1984; Bernier & Cast, 2011) and transgression (Fackler, 2010; O'Neil, 2009; Julius, 2002; Stephenson, 2010) were applied to demonstrate that young people were the motivating force behind the continuance of ICH in schools.

Theories of neo-traditions argue they are introduced to help solidify a culture, and aid in creating a common past, especially when there is an absence of shared history (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983; Kong, 2007; Park, 2011; Neeman & Rubin, 2009). Shared ICH practices act as a cohesive force (Park, 2011). Whether they are invented, acquired or embellished, they aid in developing and maintaining common sentiments and identities (Park, 2011, 522). Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) argue that traditions are invented by the State and the dominant classes to ensure social cohesion and loyalty. Control is firmly in the hands of the dominant section of society, and the rituals performed by that culture serve to bond and reinforce the

ideas and values of the dominant section (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983, 12-13).

Participants include apparent markers of conformity, such as wearing a ball gown or hiring a limousine, to make their adherence to the cultural ideal credible (Neeman & Rubin, 2009, 63).

ICH allows for the suspension, or to a lesser degree, the manoeuvrability of the usual power hierarchy (Seligman *et al.*, 2009). Rituals involve ambiguities and power play between participants (Fiske, 1993, 251). The ambiguities, different interpretations and altering versions allows for participants to hold alternative meanings of ICH involvement (Fackler, 2010, 610; O'Neil, 2009, 36). An example used by O'Neil (2009) of African American slaves in South Carolina in 1861 covertly gaining some autonomy through wedding rituals by appearing to obey their slave-owners' requests, but added their own clandestine symbolisms. Another example is prisoners of war who were ordered by their captors to play music as a display of dominance, yet used the opportunity to communicate and encourage each other (Fackler, 2010, 610).

Theories of transgressions are used to explain the students' belief that they had ownership of ICH expressions. The transgression will be allowed to occur as long as it is performed in the temporary condition and control will return to the status quo once the ritual is over. Transgression reinforces the control of the status quo (Julius, 2002). The act of participation in ICH is an expression of the participants' acceptance and commitment to the dominant cultural beliefs and values (Purzycki & Arakchaa, 2013, 382). Transgressing for a temporary period reinforces the significance and compliance to the maintenance of the status quo on all other occasions (Julius, 2002, 186). The transgression is accepted as a temporary condition, with all involved recognising that the suspension of the social order exists only temporarily (Stephenson, 2010, 138).

This study applies Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque to explain students' autonomy during school departure rituals (Bakhtin, 1984). Carnivalesque is a term to describe the subversion of the dominant structure, approached with humour and chaos (Stein, 1991, 90). The "norms of etiquette" and normal social status are suspended (Bakhtin, 1984, 10). Bakhtin uses the example of the medieval tradition of 'The Feast of Fools' in which the social structure is turned on its head and peasants

become the aristocracy, and vice-versa, to explain transgressions. Theory on the carnivalesque displays the dual dependence required of each participant group to allow the transgression to occur (Bakhtin, 1984, 10). Considering the carnivalesque as a rebellion against the social system and dominant control, it is evident that the control is firmly in the hands of the aristocracy who allow the event to proceed. Bernier-Cast (2011) accredits the rise of the carnivalesque in modern times as being linked to the rise of global capitalism, with the focus more precisely on the desire of the individual. The celebration of the irrational, vulgar, grotesque, inane and sexual is an expression that centres on status and self-seeking fulfilment (Bernier-Cast, 2011, 23). The physical body in carnivalesque is representative of all humanity, not the individualised body (Bakhtin, 1984, 19). The grotesque elements of the carnivalesque symbolise death, but also renewal (Bakhtin, 1984, 19).

Conclusion

Current scholarly heritage literature has been examined; the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003) and the *Burra Charter* (Australia ICOMOS, 1999) have been considered. The threads that emerged in scholarly heritage that this thesis will focus on are: that ICH is predominantly performed in the developing world, that ICH provides a link with the past, that ICH is under threat of globalisation, that ICH is under threat of stagnation and that ICH is transmitted generationally.

This thesis addresses the lack of literature on contemporary examples of ICH performed by young people that occurs within contemporary Western society. The creation of material memories via photographs and the keeping of objects demonstrate that ICH is performed to be reflected on in the future, rather than as a link to the past. School departure rituals are innovative and creative allowing for transformations and transitions to occur. New technology enables alternative meanings and methods of transmission to exist. The addition of recently introduced neo-traditions and transgressions are evidence that young people are willing to enhance and continue ICH expressions. This study will demonstrate the young peoples' awareness and appreciation of ICH in a contemporary Western context. The

next chapter will outline the application of methodologies. The methods of data collection and analysis will also be detailed.

Chapter Two: Research Methodology

The methods used in this study were observation, participation, conducting interviews and analysing existing literature and media. The most crucial element that I wanted to incorporate into the study was the personal ‘voices’ of the participants. To access the opinions of the participants in the most authentic manner, I included verbatim quotes from the interviewed participants. To include the participants’ individual experiences, I elected to base the study on a qualitative research approach, with an overarching influence of Phenomenology, with consideration of Ethnography and Grounded Theory. Selected case vignettes were incorporated to explore individuals’ experiences. As all methods used are qualitative approaches, they have elements in common that overlap.

A qualitative research approach best suited my intention of accessing participants’ personal experiences because it allowed for interpretation of data and is primarily concerned with the participants’ experiences (Wertz *et al.*, 2011, 25). An overarching phenomenological approach was applied to the analysis of data, as it allowed the participants to express their views of their own lived experiences. I attended school balls, took part in graduation ceremonies and observed muck up days and leavers’ weeks. I was a participant observer, an active participant in the social setting (Donley, 2012, 41). Therefore the study also contains an element of Ethnography. Grounded Theory informed the study as all the data was first collected, and conclusions were then drawn from the findings.

All participants were categorised into participant groups. These participant groups consisted of what I considered to be the three key performers in school rituals: students, teachers and parents. A detailed account of the interviewed participants is discussed later in this chapter. During the interviews, I had no specified direction that conversations would take, but rather offered a number of thematic contexts. The letting go of preconceived ideas and assumptions allowed the main themes of commonality to emerge. My alternate option was to collate my assumptions and test them against the participants’ feedback. I chose to put the thoughts and opinions of the participants in the foreground, especially in the case of the student participant group, because I am no longer part of their generation.

Research Motivations

With all research projects, there are a number of possible approaches and methodology choices to be made. Each decision made has an impact on the tone of the study. In the preliminary stages of my study, I believed the primary method of research that would occur would be observation from the position of the outsider much like the position of a fly on the wall. My thoughts were that if I were to remain distanced from the subjects I would produce less biased data. The more I researched methodology, the more my opinion on the most suitable methods began to alter. I began to favour methods that would allow the key viewpoint to be from the position of the participant.

As I developed my ideas and narrowed my field of study, I realised the distance between teacher and student was consequential and an issue that could not be ignored. Regardless of my positive relationship with the students, all the information gathered from them is potentially tainted by the power relation that exists between us. The possibility that students may have adjusted their responses to my questions, as a teacher in a position of power, must be considered. All my interactions with students were undertaken with my own awareness of being in the public arena. I was also aware that the presence of an audience, in the form of other interviewees, potentially affects the behaviour of other students.

Theoretical Framework

Rather than rigorously adhering to one method of research, the study borrowed elements from a number of approaches. The four approaches used by the study were Qualitative, Phenomenology, Grounded Theory and Ethnography. I selected the most suitable elements from each methodology. The study took Grounded Theory's focus on making sense of cultural elements (Charmaz, 1990, 2003, 2004), Ethnography's focus on the experience of the individual from the perspective of the insider (Agar, 1997, 2010) and Phenomenology's focus on the lived experience as key influences (Knaack, 1984; Moustakas, 1994; Randles, 2012). The purpose of extracting elements from different methodologies, rather than adhering to one

discipline, was to fulfil the aim of creating a commentary of the participants' perceived real life experiences. The personal stories of the interviewees are told from their own viewpoint allowing for their individual perspective to take prominence. Without giving the participants the opportunity to express their opinions and their own experiences, including their 'voices' in the study, I feel the purpose of this study would be lost. A summary of each methodology and how it was applied to the study follows.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research was originally developed by individual investigators conducting research through which new knowledge was required (Wertz *et al.*, 2011, 15). This method is an empirical approach that attempts to make meaning out of the experiences of others. The focus on the reasons, motivations for perceptions, beliefs and behaviours can provide a better understanding of the lived experiences of people (Donley, 2012, 39). It involves an interpretive approach of data collected from the participants. In an attempt to make sense of and interpret phenomena, qualitative researchers study phenomena in its natural settings (Ospina, 2004, 2).

The appeal of applying a qualitative perspective is that the nature of qualitative research is exploratory and inductive (Donley, 2012, 39). Conclusions can be arrived at from analysis of information gathered through the interview process, including the participants' opinions, without attempting to arrive at a definitive proof (Alvesson, *et al.*, 2011). Qualitative research does not rely on scientific data, therefore, it is often criticised for being less rigorous and less reliable than quantitative research methods (Donley, 2012; Langdrige, 2011). Although Donley (2012) and Langdrige (2011) suggest that a qualitative approach can at times be less rigorous, I argue that applying qualitative theory for this study allowed access into the beliefs and values that inform ICH involvement that a quantitative approach would not supply.

I applied a qualitative approach by attending school departure rituals as a teacher participant, not as a known researcher, with the hope I could observe student participants in a casual and relaxed environment. This was my attempt to apply the

method of “submergence” (Agar, 1997, 1156- 1157). Submergence is recommended in a number of qualitative methods. The study used the work of Gadamer (1975) who offered advice on how to submerge into a population without the expectation of complete acceptance. Rather, Gadamer suggests that once the researcher is aware of any personal prejudices, strategies can be employed to make them productive, such as in my own personal experience with school rituals (Gadamer, 1975, 330). I acknowledge that my own experiences and values have a bearing on my interpretation of data collected.

The notion of submergence must be clarified in a school setting. Agar (1997, 1156- 1157) offers an example of submergence when as a young European male, he moved into a small village in the south of India and, through living, working and observing the activities of the local population, attempts to become one of them. Just as we know that a young European male will never become a male from southern India, so too we know that a teacher will never become a student.

Another problem that must be addressed is the distribution of power. Teachers and students are without question separate. Teachers are a part of the landscape of school, yet they do not have membership in the student population. The two groups are separated by their defined roles and expected behaviours. It is not possible, or desirable, for a teacher to attempt to submerge into the student population in any other form than as a teacher and with the awareness of the distance that exists between the two separate social groups.

Phenomenology

The aim of Phenomenology is to reveal meaning, rather than proving a defined truth, or arguing a point. The philosophy of Phenomenology relates to individuals cognitively constructing what they believe to be true of their lived experience in a situation, phenomenon or event (Chapman & McNeill, 2005, 18; Sharkey, 2001, 17; Husserl, 1970, 438). I was interested in uncovering what involvement in school departure rituals meant to students, but was aware of my own beliefs; however the participants’ agency must be considered:

People are active, conscious beings aware of what is going on in the social situation and capable of making choices about how to act (Chapman & McNeill, 2005, 18).

Phenomenology is an attitude as well as a research method (Flood, 2010, 8). The purpose of Phenomenology is to gain an understanding of the structure and meaning of human experience, and to uncover what the participants values and believes about the event, from their own perspective (Chapman & McNeill, 2005, 20).

I selected to include aspects of a phenomenological approach as I wanted the study to include intimate and personal accounts. A phenomenological approach is able to provide opportunity for the researcher to “intuitively become one with the subject” (Moustakas, 1994, 46). Although the separation between researched and researcher can never be completely dismissed, the nature of Phenomenology results in closer involvement of the researcher (Randle, 2012, 2). The researcher’s close involvement is a potential strength of a study (Chapman & McNeill, 2005, 21).

Another applied aspect of Phenomenology that suited the study, is that it does not require a rule-like structure to be imposed, therefore suiting the dynamic nature of school departure rituals and allowing for interpretations and personal opinions of participants (Sharkey, 2001, 18). Phenomenology was used as it suited my desire to understand participants’ opinions and views on school departure rituals from their perspective. I have been a student participant myself in school rituals; however, that was as a member of a previous generation. Now, as an ‘outsider’ of the current generation, I do not have access to their experience. As a teacher and observer I can draw conclusions, but rather than try to exclude the researcher’s prior understanding, in my case school ritual involvement, Phenomenology encourages the researcher to get lost in the topic, literature and data to test the researcher’s prior understandings (Sharkey, 2001, 17). I entered the research arena with an open and genuine attitude to embrace the possibilities that may be uncovered in the research process.

Grounded Theory

The study borrowed aspects from Grounded Theory, rather than strictly adhering to its method. The framework of Grounded Theory is very useful for the study, and the

ideological approach of Grounded Theory suited my objectives. The primary aim of Grounded Theory is to generate theory from data that has been obtained through social research (Langdrige, 2004, 294; Oktay, 2012, 5). Glaser and Strauss (1967) formulated a set of guidelines for generating explanations for social phenomena. Grounded Theory involves systemically coding data to analyse emerging patterns. This creates new questions, which generates further research. A key assumption of Grounded Theory is not differentiating between data collection and analysis (Langdrige, 2004, 294). On this point, Oktay states:

In grounded theory research, data gathering and data analysis are simultaneous (Oktay, 2012, 15).

One half of the founding theorists of Grounded Theory, Barney Glaser, argues that all information that presents itself is considered data (Glaser, 2001, 145-165). Glaser's quote "all is data" encapsulates his attitude towards research in general (Glaser, 2001, 145). The approach was ideal for the study due to the casual exposure I have as a school teacher. I observed, and at times overheard, students talking about inclusion in school departure rituals in an informal setting. This candid disclosure of information is considered relevant. All contact with both formal and informal data has helped to form my general view of what student participants understand of school departure rituals.

Grounded Theory influenced the approach I took to analysing the data I had collected, which will be detailed at the end of this chapter (Charmaz, 2004, 502; Crowther & Lancaster, 2012, 185). The elements of Grounded Theory I applied were as follows: listened to recorded data numerous times, the data was then coded, and through this process I identified themes and emergent categories became apparent (Oktay, 2012, 18; Charmaz, 1990, 1163). Using this method, I identified the key themes of this thesis.

Literature on Grounded Theory contains a number of considerations that I took into account. The first is the expectation of discovery. I found myself in the preliminary stages of my research expecting meaning to materialise from my collected data. Langdrige warns of the researcher's interpretation of language having an effect on

conclusions. He uses the example of a participant who responded to an interview question with the term “ups and downs”. The decision of how positive ‘ups’ are in relation to how negative ‘downs’ are is left entirely open to the interpretation of the researcher, yet the outcome can vary widely (Langdridge, 2004, 304). I decided to contain all quotes from participants verbatim, so that their opinions were not affected by my interpretations.

Ethnography

Ethnography has its roots in Anthropology, with the main aim being cultural interpretation. It does not aim to answer a prescribed hypothesis, or use statistics or other measurable data to reach a conclusion. Ethnography focuses mainly on the researcher’s observations (Chapman & McNeill, 2005; Donley, 2012, 46; Agar, 1997, 1158). An ethnographic approach is utilised in the study to achieve a cultural exploration of school departure rituals. On the topic of culture, Geertz refers to the cultural construction in which we live out our lives. On the pursuit of making meaning from our involvement in culture Geertz observes;

... man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun. I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it therefore not an experimental science in search of law, but an interpretive one in search of meaning (Geertz, 1973, 5).

The focus of the ethnographic approach is for the researcher to submerge (Agar, 1997, 1156- 1157) into the lives of the researched, and allow the meaning to emerge through observation and other forms of data collection (Chapman & McNeill, 2005, 89). The researcher is able to obtain the point of view of an ‘insider’. Yin refers to this as *emic* (own) perspective (Yin, 2011, 12). As mentioned earlier, submergence into a school setting is done so with awareness and caution of the expectations of the role of a teacher.

The researcher often settles into the everyday life of the setting or place where the ethnographic study takes place for an extended period of time. This suited my position as a secondary teacher constantly surrounded by the goings on of daily school life. Ethnography demands that the researcher was ‘there’ (Chapman &

McNeill, 2005). I identified that something was happening culturally that I did not understand. I had been a student myself; however, our school events were meagre in scale compared to contemporary events, and the invention of new traditions such as graduation and leavers' jackets didn't exist in my time as a student. When a phenomenon occurs that you can not make meaning of, the occurrence is referred to as a "rich point" (Agar, 1997, 1157). The rich point inspires the researcher to become embroiled in the data in order to seek out an understanding. A rich point is also a signal to the researcher that the phenomena is understood and valued by the participants, yet as an outsider, the researcher does not have the cultural knowledge to make meaning of it. The purpose of Ethnography is to generate theory, as the researcher must develop a frame to explain the rich point (Agar, 1997, 1161). I utilised my curiosity of the increase of grandeur and incidence of school departure rituals as a rich point to inspire this study.

Vignette Case Studies

A vignette case study is not just a way to tell of a selected isolated incident, but is a methodological approach within its own right, and can be used to instigate discussions (Sai & Fullham, 2013; Gronhoj & Bech-Larsen, 2010). Wareing argues:

A vignette is a means of distilling data arising from participant interviews using a 'fact fiction' narrative form in order to tell a story (Wareing, 2010, 1112).

In this study, vignettes are included intertextually to help clarify personal experiences of individual students. The vignette case study is a short story about a certain experience (Gronhoj & Bech-Larsen, 2010, 461). The purposes are to be exploratory, descriptive and explanatory (Yin, 1989, 13). The inclusion of vignette case studies allows for the private and personal story of individuals to be told. A vignette case study is able to bring a bit of the 'real world' into a study (Boyce, 1996, 48). A positive aspect of including a case study is that it does not have to be representative of the general experience, but can highlight a particular situation (Chapman & McNeill, 2005, 121). The vignette case studies include the personal stories of students, whose experiences were outside the norm. The vignettes cover the story of a young homosexual male, a young religious female and a young girl

excluded from attending the ball. Exposure to vignettes can result in a better understanding of the individuals' situations and how they reacted (Emanuel & Cross, 2012, 21).

Although the method used for this thesis was a vignette case study, rather than an in-depth case study, the work of Yin (1989) in the area of case studies was also considered. Yin was instrumental in formulating the case study approach as a recognised research method and developed a technical definition of the case study approach to demand rigour, rather being viewed as an included anecdote. A case study is an empirical enquiry that investigates an event within its "real life" context (Yin, 1989, 23).

Subjectivity

I acknowledge that I have my own bias connected with school departure rituals. I have in the past been a student participant, and now in the position of teacher I make judgements of students' behaviour and at times compare this to my own experience. To what degree would this affect my own findings and could I remain unbiased? My conclusion to this dilemma was to accept that my dual roles could work to my advantage, as long as I remained aware of my subjective positioning and presuppositions. It is not possible to eliminate all preconceptions, as long as the researcher does not impose their own "*etic*" interpretation on to the participants' "*emic*" interpretations (Yin, 2011, 12). All the methods applied in qualitative approaches speak of the subjective. For the purpose of this study, subjectivity is defined as the concept which belongs to the thinking subject rather than the object of thought (Alvesson *et al.*, 2011, 4).

When applying both a phenomenological and ethnographic approach, the topic of subjectivity must be brought to the forefront. Subjectivity must be considered as a cautionary component of interviews. The purpose of interviewing participants is to attempt to access their understanding of their lived experience. I am aware that the conclusions arrived at from data collected cannot be assumed outside of the interviewed population. The inclusion of the participants' input is crucial as the

purpose of the study is to discover what participants believe to be true of their ICH experience. The study takes the position that it is only through accessing the participants' perceptions of their lived experience that meaning can be made. The participants' points of view are pivotal for identifying the value of ICH. Without the participants' perspectives, the study cannot reach any informed conclusions. Malcolm describes subjectivity as "reflecting personal prejudices, contains bias, and concerned with the impact on oneself" (1988, 149).

Limitations must be considered when analysing the results of interviews. Firstly, participants may attempt to answer a question so that their response is consistent with previous responses. A certain question may evoke memories or attitudes that affect their response. A problem may be that they make little mental effort towards the subject in question. Participants may have attitudes that do not exist in a coherent form. "Cognitive dissonance" occurs when the interviewee may have said that they enjoyed or liked something because they feel that they should (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2001, 69). I was also aware that I was in a position of authority as a teacher when interviewing students, so that may have had an outcome on the resulting data.

Choice of Example and Context

School Departure Rituals as Intangible Cultural Heritage

School departure rituals were selected to provide an example of contemporary ICH performed in the Western world by young people. It must be established whether school departure rituals are indeed expressions of ICH. To establish if school departure rituals can be considered ICH, the 2003 convention has been consulted. The *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003) defines ICH as;

The "intangible cultural heritage" means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage ... (Article 2:1, UNESCO, 2003, 2).

The 2003 convention provides instances that can be considered as manifestations of ICH:

ICH is manifested inter alia in the following domains:

- (a) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage
- (b) performing arts;
- (c) social practices, rituals and festive events;
- (d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
- (e) traditional craftsmanship. (Article 2: 2, UNESCO, 2003, 2).

The *Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2008) refers to Article 2 of the 2003 convention as the final definition used to identify all elements of ICH that are applying for inclusion on the list of ICH to be safeguarded. Labadi (2013) argues that critics have claimed the definition offered by the 2003 convention encompasses too much, and could cover anything conceived in the human mind. The definition of ICH offered by the 2003 convention, however, places “humans at the centre” and critics fail to recognise the potential for alternative management of heritage due to the human focus (Labadi, 2013, 129). Having humans as the centre acknowledges the importance of community involvement and connection with group identity that heritage allows (Sarashima, 2013, 127; Rudolf & Raymond, 2013, 166).

Article 2:2 (c) of the 2003 convention identifies social practices, rituals and festive events as manifestations of ICH. School departure rituals, are shared social events with the inclusion of the whole cohort and can therefore be considered social practices.

The convention also lists ritual as an example of ICH (Article 2:2, (c), UNESCO, 2). It must now be established if school departure rituals can be considered ritual. Turner (1967) argues that ritual structure, as he understood it to be, involved three stages. The three stages of ritual identified by Turner are; separation, transition and incorporation (1967, 94). It is in the transition phase that the participants enter what Turner refers to as the “liminal stage” (1967, 94). Turner describes the participant as “betwixt and between” (1967, 95). It is in this phase that the process of the ritual takes place. By sharing in the process the participants become “communitas”

(Turner, 1969, 94-97). During the liminal period all participants share in a sense of equality not present in normal circumstances. It is at this point that the participants become an essential 'we', such as 'the class of 2015'. Once the participants have passed through the liminal phase, they are then culturally recognised as socially altered by the ritual process (Turner, 1967, 105). The participant emerges from the ritual with altered social standing.

Rituals have an entry point, often physically as well as psychologically, where participants enter a subjunctive world where roles are questioned, boundaries are crossed, social norms are violated then reaffirmed and strengthened (Seligman *et al.*, 2008, 71). Rituals are separated from the everyday. The circumstances of ritual are:

... readily recognizable as distinct from everyday interaction: they cannot be fully accounted for in terms of ordinary intentionalities and patterns of relationship (Houseman, 2011, 76).

The appeal of ritual is the separation from the usual proceedings. Ritual slices into the mundane routine according to Lynch:

Rituals can create order out of chaos because they function as bridges that, through words and actions, provide new meanings by separating the audience from the everyday (Lynch, 2001, 115).

The separation from the everyday allows for an element of fantasy to permeate rituals. Enjoyment and escapism could be motivating reasons for the continuity of rituals as Droogers explains:

Rituals can serve all kinds of functions, as perceived by either participants or scholars or both, but people also repeat rituals because they offer diversion and satisfaction through the playful creation of a relevant alternative reality (Droogers, 2011, 139).

School departure rituals adhere to the elements of ritual as identified by Turner (1967, 1969) and Seligman *et al.* (2008). All school departure rituals have identifiable stages and an official entry point. Social statuses are altered due to involvement in school departure rituals. Identified roles in ritual allow participants the transformative experience of transcending their usual condition. The student is transformed from dependant student to autonomous graduate through the graduation

ceremony, from student to young adult through the ball, from lower grade student to leader of the school via the symbolic wearing of leavers' jackets. The experience of performing ICH as a cohort results in "communitas" (Turner, 1969, 94-97) and a sense of belonging to a membership of a group (Hoffman, 2003, 2004). School departure rituals are also severed from the everyday routine of school life. Although they are school events, they are outside of the norm as argued by Lynch (2001) and Houseman (2011). This allows for an element of fantasy to be included in school departure rituals (Droogers, 2011).

The 2003 convention identified festive occasions as examples of ICH (Article 2:2, (c), UNESCO, 2003, 2). School departure rituals can be considered festive occasions as they are anticipated with enthusiasm and are performed outside the normal school conditions (Droogers, 2011; Nora 1989). ICH expressions refer to the altered conditions of the everyday, to the 'special occasion' situation of school departure rituals (Cole, 2004, 34).

School departure rituals also correspond with definitions of ICH offered by heritage experts. The definition of ICH offered in the inaugural publication of *International Journal of Intangible Heritage*, by Alissandra Cummins, President of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), describes ICH as "expressions of cultural heritage such as language, music, dance theatre, social practices, rituals and celebrations and traditional knowledge" (*IJHI*, Vol. 1, 2006). School departure rituals adhere to this definition as social practices, rituals for the aforementioned reasons, and as celebrations.

Commentators have described ICH, focusing on the human connection it provides. ICH has been described by experts as "... heritage that has humans and human activity as its centre" (Labadi, 2013, 129) and "the *living* cultures of people" (Lenzerini, 2011, 101). The human element is included in the description of ICH as "embodied in people rather than objects" (Logan, 2007, 189). Historically the Australia ICOMOS *Burra Charter*, 1999, was based on the materiality of heritage, but acknowledges the intangible by the social connection and lived experience stating:

Places of cultural significance enrich people's lives, often providing a deep and inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape, to the past and to lived experiences (*Burra Charter*, ICOMOS, 1999, 1).

The *Burra Charter* awards heritage sites value based on cultural significance but recognises the importance of intangible aspects in the social and spiritual connections people feel towards a site. The *Burra Charter* defines cultural significance as;

Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations (Article 1.2, *Burra Charter*, ICOMOS, 1999, 2).

School departure rituals are a social event, and therefore recognised as having cultural significance and value as defined by the *Burra Charter* of:

... social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations (*Burra Charter*, ICOMOS, 1999, 2).

According to Lloyd (2009) the beauty or structure of a monument is less significant than what occurs in the minds of the participants. Kaufman (2013) argues that many tangible places owe their importance to the intangible values connected to the events that occurred at the site. Other commentators see no need to separate intangible heritage from monumental heritage with experts stating it is time to “declare an end to the tangible/intangible dichotomy” in policy and protocol (Morris, 2013, 88) and “Heritage is Intangible” (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 289). The *Burra Charter* recognises heritage value in the form of social sentiment and spiritual connection to a place which acknowledges the intangible (ICOMOS, *Burra Charter*, 1999, 2.5, 12).

Taking into consideration the above mentioned definitions offered by experts and academics on the topic, school departure rituals can be considered examples of ICH. School departure rituals also meet the requirements to be considered as examples of identifiable rituals.

Selecting the School

The school in which the study was conducted was chosen for a number of reasons. Firstly it was essential to conduct the study in a government school. The desire was to conduct the study in a secular environment that was devoid of religious connections in regard to practised rituals. *The School Education Act, 1999*, stipulates

that “the curriculum and teaching in public schools is not to promote any particular religious practice, denomination or sect” (Religious Education, *Western Australian Department of Education*, 2008, 3). Secondly, the school was founded only eight years ago, so only three cohorts had graduated at the time of the study. The importance of this was that the students were still negotiating what they included in departure rituals without the certainty of tradition that some older institutions have. Thirdly, the size of the student population is one of the largest in the state. Due to the number of students attending the school, it was hoped that the interviewed participants would be representative of the larger student population of Western Australian government schools. The school is situated in a working class socio-economic area. It is a densely populated suburb south of Perth CBD. The area that has only been developed in the past decade and a large number of the student population reside in estate style housing, with a mix of both personal ownership, rental properties and state housing.

Data Collection Methods

Interviews

My desire to base the study on the perspective of the participants made the inclusion of interviews essential. I interviewed the three key players of school rituals; students, parents and teachers. I wanted to access students’ points of view, and what they believed to be their truths about school departure rituals. A diverse range of students were interviewed with representatives from each gender, differing sexual orientations, Indigenous and non-Indigenous and varying cultural backgrounds to reflect the greater student population.

Parents and teachers were included in the interview process. Interviewing parents was valuable as they were able to compare their child’s experience with their own. Parent feedback allowed for the changes that have occurred in the past generation to be identified and compared to current trends. Parents also provided valuable insight into the behaviour and preparation of their child in out-of-school time in regard to school rituals. Parents were able to provide an account of how much their child invested emotionally and economically in school departure ritual involvement.

Teachers were valuable interview subjects as they were able to locate periods of time when they noticed new traditions emerging. Teachers who had been in the profession for a long period of time were able to discuss changing trends, provide comparisons and identify historical connections. Teachers were able to report on students' behaviours and their observations of school ritual involvement from an 'insiders' perspective. As I have been a secondary teacher for the past decade, I was also able to provide onsite observations. I acknowledge that I bring to this study my own interpretation of school departure rituals.

Selecting the Interview Participants

Interviewed participants were recruited on a voluntary basis. All student participants were drawn from the same school, and all were in their final year of schooling. The students were recruited by announcing a brief outline of the opportunity to be involved, and what was required, at a Year 12 assembly. The possibility of being involved was also advertised in the daily notices that are announced in class at the start of each day. The purpose of advertising broadly to the entire year group was to attract a diverse range of students. The sample size of students interviewed was fifteen to ensure a realistic cross-section of the student population. Male and female students and a number of students from culturally diverse backgrounds volunteered to be interviewed. The pool of students interviewed were representative of the general population of the school which largely reflects a working-class, multicultural population.

The interviewed group included: two openly homosexual male students, two Aboriginal male students, three Maori females, one white South African male student, two recent female immigrants from England and five Australian students. The interviewed group reflects the general composition of the student population, although the Aboriginal and homosexual student population is over represented in this study. The names of the students selected for the vignette case studies have been changed. There are a high proportion of naval families at the study school, with three of the students in the interviewed group having a parent in the Navy. The study school also has a high population of fly out workers, with the area having 21%

Technical and Trade workers compared to the national average of 14.2% (*Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census, 2011*). Four students had a parent who worked away from home. So that the students did not feel intimidated, the interview process was held in a group situation. Students were interviewed in groups of five for a number of reasons. Firstly this was to make them feel at ease rather than face the potentially intimidating experience of being interviewed by an adult. Also it gave the students the opportunity to react to others' statements. The group situation also aided students to be able to either reinforce other students' comments, or dispute them. However, I also acknowledge that interviewing students in groups allows for the possibility for one to dominate the conversation, or for others to just agree, rather than elaborate in front of their peers. The possibility that students did not answer to their full capacity must be considered in the collected data.

Parents and teachers were also recruited on a voluntary basis. The details of the study were advertised in the school newsletter. Six parents and six teachers were interviewed. A variety of age groups, cultures and genders were included. Parents and teachers were given a list of questions to read prior to the interview, and then given the same themes as below, once in the interview.

Teachers were interviewed on a voluntary basis. Six teachers were interviewed, ranging in experience from four years of teaching to nearly 40 years of experience. The length of time that teachers had been in the education sector was an important factor in gaining an insight into the changes that have occurred over time. The teachers were an equal number of each gender. The teachers' interviews were conducted singularly in a private setting.

A total of six parents were interviewed. All parents who volunteered to be interviewed were female. Parents were also interviewed singularly in a private setting. All parents interviewed either had a current student of school leaving age, or a student who had left school within the past two years.

Participants were given a number of thematic categories to respond to. A number of prompts were included to initiate conversation amongst the students. All participants' responses were recorded. The categories were as follows;

- Preparation prior to ritual. (Possible prompts - expectations, preparation, Sources of personal ideas and expectations?)
- Importance of School ritual. (Possible prompts -Why be involved in it? What does it mean to you? Why continue? Relevance of ritual?)
- Historical background to event. (Possible prompts -Where does ritual come from? How should it develop? Opinion on recent additions, for example, the after party? How did traditions evolve?)
- Creation of material memories. (Possible prompts – What is the importance of photographs and mementos? What is the appeal of recording the event?)
- Reflection. (Possible prompts - Were your expectations met? Should the practice continue? Was it a valuable event? What did you gain from involvement? Any unexpected results?)

Data Analysis

Once the interview data was collected, a number of analysis techniques were applied. Firstly, a thorough comparison with the existing literature was conducted. Interview data was compared to establish commonality of participant experience with ICH. The data was analysed to establish common threads. The method applied is outlined below:

- Listened to recorded interviews
- Created notes from the interviews
- Conducted several readings of the data in note form to achieve a holistic view of the participants' feedback.
- Collated notes into groups of repeated ideas
- Brainstormed repeated ideas into possible emerging themes (pre-themes)
- Repeated the process until all available data was collected into groups
- Created four themes from the participants' feedback

Chapter Three: The 2003 UNESCO Convention

In 2003, UNESCO adopted the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003). The 2003 convention is designed to be an internationally recognised legal convention to encourage the protection of heritage performed in the intangible realm, such as dances, music, craftsmanship and celebrations (Kurin, 2007, 10). The 2003 convention, adopted with the best of intentions to ensure the survival of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) for the benefit of future generations, contains some intrinsic oversights. The findings of this study challenge some implicit or underlying assumptions of the convention. This chapter will examine the historical background that led to the adoption of the 2003 convention and the areas in which it is deficient in explaining ICH.

It has been argued by critics that the 2003 convention was adopted in reaction to the *World Heritage Convention* (UNESCO, 1972). The 1972 convention was viewed by some as an official mechanism which inadvertently favoured a Western Eurocentric and monumental version of heritage (Labadi, 2013, 130; Howell, 2013, 105; Rudolf & Raymond, 2013, 164). In the 31 years between the adoption of the two conventions, UNESCO and other heritage agencies attempted to address heritage needs with a number of other official documents and charters that eventually served as frameworks for the 2003 convention. The gradual move from the view that heritage belonged solely in the material realm, to recognising that heritage can possess intangible elements, occurred for a number of social and political reasons.

The first section of this chapter discusses the historical factors that impacted on the adoption of the 2003 convention. The remaining sections will focus on the inadvertent assumptions contained in the 2003 convention. The three underlying assumptions examined are, that ICH is dying out, that the younger generation is disinterested in ICH and that ICH occurs mainly in the developing world.

Historical Background to the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*

Inspired by the destruction of archaeological sites during World War Two, UNESCO was formed to preserve and protect cultural heritage (Boswell, 2008, 11). A sense of permanence was sought in reaction to the mass loss that was experienced due to war (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009). In 1972, UNESCO adopted the *World Heritage Convention* to maintain and preserve built monuments and buildings for future generations (Leimgruber, 2010, 163; Boswell, 2008, 11). A fault identified in the 1972 convention was that it advanced the Western Eurocentric version of heritage and neglected the intangible living heritage in the developing world (Smith & Akagawa, 2009; Lenzerini, 2011; Rudolf & Raymond, 2013). During the negotiations leading to the adoption of the *World Heritage Convention* (UNESCO, 1972), a number of state representatives argued that intangible elements should be included in the criteria, but were unable to make them applicable within the context of the 1972 convention (Lenzerini, 2011, 104). By the 1990s, demands from Nation States from the developing world resulted in UNESCO having to take action to include and recognise ICH. The developing world argued that it expressed more of its culture in the living form (Aikawa-Faure, 2009, 15). Complaints by Nations States from the developing world claiming they were excluded by the *World Heritage Convention* (UNESCO, 1972) led the then Director General of UNESCO, Frederico Mayor, to declare in 1992:

UNESCO can no longer remain a stranger to the interest [in ICH] expressed by the international community (Aikawa-Faure, 2009, 15).

It was hoped that the 2003 convention would overcome the perceived exclusions of member states from the developing world (Labadi, 2013, 130; Howell, 2013, 105; Rudolf & Raymond, 2013, 164).

The gradual change from viewing heritage as monumental to including intangible elements occurred due to shifts in how heritage was managed and thought about in the period of time between the adoption of the 1972 convention and the 2003 convention. A closer focus on the intangible occurred at the same time as an intellectual shift towards the concept of development in the late 1970s (Blake, 2009,

48). Development had been thought of as primarily economic and viewed as an indicator of success. Within the concept of development, culture was positioned as the opposite, especially traditional cultures that occurred in the developing world (Blake, 2009, 48-49). Ethnic and local cultures were offered as an alternative to commercialism and over development. A shift in thought in the 1970s to view culture as a means of accessing spirituality resulted in traditional cultures becoming more popular (Lenzerini, 2011, 104). The notion of sustainability was popularised and intangible culture was viewed as more organic and genuine (Blake, 2009). An academic paradigm shift in the field of heritage also took place in the 1980s and 1990s (Rudolf & Raymond, 2013). Heritage experts began to place a greater focus on the communities that performed ICH. It became recommended heritage practice to consult and include the people, communities or Indigenous groups who owned or had traditional links to heritage. Communities began to be viewed as owners of heritage, rather than institutions, such as museums (Rudolf & Raymond, 2013, 155). The 2003 convention has been commended for placing people and communities as a central focus (Labadi, 2013, 129). The 2003 convention recognises in the preamble that communities “play an important role in the production, safeguarding, maintenance and recreation of the intangible cultural heritage” (UNESCO, 2003, 1). Communities are acknowledged in the *Purposes of the Convention* (Article 1, UNESCO, 2003, 2) as well as in the *Definitions* (Article 2, UNESCO, 2003, 2). The 2003 convention grants communities the power to identify and define ICH, as stated in the convention:

The “intangible cultural heritage” means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage (Article 2, UNESCO, 2003, 2).

The move to recognising the intangible was gradual, but evident in a number of official heritage documents introduced in the time between the 1972 and 2003 conventions. A transitional document that began to consider the intangible was the ICOMOS document, *Historic Gardens: The Florence Charter* (ICOMOS, 1982). The *Florence Charter* considers gardens as monuments referring to them as “living monuments” (Article 3, ICOMOS, 1982). By acknowledging the living nature of

historic sites the concept of intangibility in heritage is introduced, although not deliberately, in the *Florence Charter* (ICOMOS, 1982).

The 2003 convention is also influenced by the *Nara Document on Authenticity* (ICOMOS, 1994). The Nara document addresses the need for greater awareness in cultural and heritage diversity. An aim of the Nara document is to conserve heritage, explicitly including the intangible in the preamble:

All cultures and societies are rooted in the particular forms and means of tangible and intangible expression which constitute their heritage, and these should be respected (*Nara Document on Authenticity*, Preamble, 7, ICOMOS 1994).

The ethos expressed in the Nara document to recognise the value of heritage, stating in the preamble “diversity of cultures and heritage in our world is an irreplaceable source of spiritual and intellectual richness for all humankind” is echoed in the 2003 convention (*Nara Document on Authenticity*, ICOMOS, 1994).

In 1992, the World Heritage Committee added the category of ‘Cultural Landscape’ to the criteria of the *World Heritage Convention* (UNESCO, 1972) in the hope it would encompass the intangible, yet the concept was still reliant on the physical space and did not adequately represent the intangible (Aikawa-Faure, 2009, 15). The proposed *System to Honour Cultural Space with Remarkable Intangible Heritage* (UNESCO, 1997) was another attempt to recognise the intangible but was still dependent on the material notion of physical ‘spaces’ (Aikawa-Faure, 2009, 18).

Both the *Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore* (UNESCO, 1989) and *Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity* (UNESCO, 2001) are acknowledged in the preamble to the 2003 convention (UNESCO, 2003, 1). The *Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity* (2001) has the similar aims of preservation and conservation of ICH as the 2003 convention (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009, 8). The *Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity* (2001) was unsuccessful because it lacked the power of a convention and did not have organised member states with clear obligations to make monetary contributions, relying instead on donations and gifts for funds (Hafstein, 2009, 95;

Kearney, 2009, 214). In reaction to this problem, the 2003 convention includes details on monetary obligations at *Contributions of State Parties to the Fund* (Article 26, UNESCO, 2003, 10).

The 2003 convention also takes elements from *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* (UNESCO, 2001). This document paid closer attention to the emotional, intellectual and spiritual benefits of heritage than had previously been done, which is an acknowledgement of the intangible (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009, 8). The 2001 document recognises “cultural heritage as the wellspring of creativity” (Article 7, UNESCO, 2001, 5). The influence of the 2001 document is reflected in the 2003 convention’s notions of diversity and creativity explicitly mentioned in the preamble (UNESCO, 2003, 1). The notions of *Co-operation* (Article 19) and *International Assistance* (Article 20 - 23) included in the 2003 convention have their roots in the 2001 document (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009, 8).

Commentators have argued that the 2003 convention contains some faults. The inclusion of minority and Indigenous cultures is dependent on the processes and bodies organised by the State Parties (Marrie, 2009, 177). The absence of inclusion of minority groups and Indigenous people in decision making is a concern for a number of commentators (Marrie, 2009, 176; Lenzerini, 2011, 112; Leimgruber, 2010, 167; Rudolf & Raymond, 2013, 157; Kurin, 2007, 14; Boswell, 2008, 18). Fairchild Ruggles and Silverman (2009) and Lenzerini (2011) cite possible abuses of human rights as another concern. Involvement of official heritage agencies may impose their values on practices or deliberately engage to ensure that minority cultures do not assimilate in order to keep them culturally “pure” (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009, 2).

Selection based on meeting criteria to gain inclusion on UNESCO’s safeguarding lists, is at the cost of other expressions of ICH being excluded (Hodder, 2010, 870). The decision to place practices on the list also raises the question of judgement of which practices are worthy of protection (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009, 10). A consideration is that the responsibility of ensuring that ICH is safeguarded rests with the Nation States that have ratified the convention (Kurin, 2007, 12). The

convention does not offer guidance as to which agency or organisation should have authority over the application of the convention (Kurin, 2007, 13).

Many State Parties that ratified the convention did so knowing that their nation's ICH had prestige value (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009, 7). Despite the aim of the convention to ensure that all heritage is equal, inclusion on the list acknowledges a hierarchy and elitism (Hafstein, 2009, 106). A possible motivation for inscription on UNESCO lists is to benefit from tourism; however, the effects of tourism may have adverse consequences for the participants (Hafstein, 2009, 106).

These problems are worthy of consideration, but as Kurin (2007) writes, although the 2003 convention may not be able to safeguard ICH completely, we do not have any better solution to manage ICH at the moment. The following sections will examine some explicit assumptions contained with the 2003 convention which do not explain vibrant ICH, performed by youth in a Western context.

Implicit Assumptions in the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*

Intangible Cultural Heritage is Dying out

The 2003 convention inadvertently represents ICH as being phenomena that is vulnerable to extinction. ICH is referred throughout the convention as in “danger” (Article 13, (c) UNESCO, 2003, 6) and described as being under “grave threats of deterioration, disappearance and destruction” (UNESCO, 2003, 1). The very title of the convention, and the use of the word “safeguard”, indicates the administrative belief that ICH is dying out (UNESCO, 2003). A provision of the convention is that each State Party must endeavour to alert the public of dangers to ICH:

... keep the public informed of the dangers threatening such heritage, and of the activities carried out in pursuance of this Convention (Article 14, (b), UNESCO, 2003, 7).

The 2003 convention's *Operational Directives for the Implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2008) criteria for inscription on the *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of*

Urgent Safeguarding stipulate that unless safeguarded, some ICH will not survive.

The Guidelines state:

The element is in extremely urgent need of safeguarding because it is facing grave threats as a result of which it cannot be expected to survive without immediate safeguarding (Article 1.1, (b), *Operational Guidelines*, UNESCO, 2008, 1).

The wording of the 2003 convention indicates that UNESCO assumes ICH is delicate, fragile and doomed. The convention states as the first aim and purpose of the convention is to “safeguard” the intangible heritage (Article 1 (a), UNESCO, 2003, 2). The language used in relation to heritage is worthy of consideration because it affects our notion of and approach to ICH. Smith and Waterton argue:

Indeed, the ways in which we write, talk and think about heritage issues matter. They matter because they influence and reflect not only the ways in which we act, but also how we identify and manage heritage in practice (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 290).

The entire purpose of the convention is to safeguard ICH. The convention describes safeguarding as:

“Safeguarding” means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage (Article 2: 3, UNESCO, 2003, 3).

The convention states ICH can be safeguarded if it can be identified, documented and researched. The impression that ICH is endangered is strengthened when the document describes ICH as in need of preservation, protection and requiring revitalisation (UNESCO, 2003, 3). The *Burra Charter* also represents heritage sites as being delicate and in need of protection. The *Burra Charter* states as a reason to conserve heritage sites is because “They are irreplaceable and precious” (ICOMOS *Burra Charter*, 1999, 1). The value of heritage sites is not in dispute, but rather the administrative approach to how heritage is represented.

ICH is also represented as endangered by commentators on the topic. Language used to describe ICH practices positions them as in danger of disappearing. The Japanese silk weaving industry is described as on the “brink of extinction” due to people no longer coming forward to learn the skills (Okpyo, 2013, 74). Altaic languages are described as in “danger of dying out” due to modernity (Woonho, Hyun-Jo & Juwon, 2012, 115). The languages are described as “endangered” and therefore they must be safeguarded to “prevent their becoming extinct” (Woonho, Hyun-Jo & Juwon, 2012, 115). Traditional Indonesian dances are described as “facing extinction” due to lifestyle changes (Tomioka, 2012, 78). ICH in Wales has to adapt in order to “survive” (Howell, 2012, 108). ICH is said to be in the process of being “destroyed” and traditional knowledge of the environment has almost “entirely disappeared” (Carbonell, 2012, 64). Traditional Komizan fishing boats are on the “verge of complete extinction” and the traditional knowledge of the craft has “almost disappeared” (Bozanic & Buljubasic, 2012, 18). Commentators have identified ICH practices that they perceive to be in desperate need of revitalisation or face permanent extinction (Brandao & Silva, 2011, 22; Bozanic & Buljubasic, 2012, 16; Margolies, 2011, 26). These examples demonstrate that ICH is overwhelming represented as “fragile” and under threat of dying out in heritage literature (Bortolotto, 2010, 97).

Young People are Disinterested in Intangible Cultural Heritage

The 2003 convention positions young people as not being interested in ICH expressions. The convention states in its introduction:

Considering the need to build greater awareness, especially among the younger generations, of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage and of its safeguarding (UNESCO, 2003, 1).

“The need to build greater awareness” indicates that the committee believes that large proportions of younger people are not aware of the “importance” of safeguarding ICH (UNESCO, 2003, 1). The 2003 convention creates the impression that the majority of young people are not interested or involved in ICH. The idealised view of ICH is that it is passed down from the older generation, to the younger generation (Lenzerini, 2011; Junko, 2011; Kearney, 2009). The 2003

convention insists that ICH is transmitted “generation to generation” (Article 2:1, UNESCO, 2003, 2).

Young people are mentioned specifically twice in the convention. Apart from the example above, young people are targeted again at Article 14 (a). The convention specifically targets the younger generation by stating:

... educational, awareness-raising and information programmes, aimed at the general public, in particular young people (Article 14, {a:i}, UNESCO, 2003, 6).

It is not only the convention which has positioned young people as largely disinterested in ICH. Commentators have also expressed concerns of the younger generation not engaging in traditional ICH. The problem occurs on either end of the generational continuum, with the younger generation moving away from their traditional areas, or the older generation declining in numbers. The most critical threat to the silk weaving tradition in Japan is not industrialisation, but the breakdown of the traditional apprentice system that in the past ensured continuity of skills through small family businesses (Okpyo, 2013). The apprentice system has broken down due to the ambitions of the younger generation, either moving away or not wanting to be involved in the family business due to financial reasons. The possibility that when the present aging population retires, there will not be skilled artisans to replace them, concerns heritage experts (Okpyo, 2013, 77; Margolies, 2011, 26). Junko argues the same point highlighting that now traditional roles for young girls are being performed by women in their fifties, just to ensure that the ICH practice is continued (2012, 86).

In the absence of generational contact, the role of ICH transmission is taken over by organised institutions (Nora, 1989; Brandao & Silva, 2011; Margolies, 2011). Due to the declining number of trained artisans and aging populations, public institutions such as schools now “preserve and transmit” ICH (Junko, 2011, 93). In the past, music was traditionally taught to children from a young age by their families or accomplished musicians in their community, but is now taught “outside the traditional cultural transfer” as schools now have the role (Margolies, 2011, 26-27). The hope of Labadi is that inclusion on the UNESCO lists may help interest the younger generation. Labadi states that the lists might “ensure that the younger

generation becomes more interested” unintentionally inferring that the younger generation is not interested (2013, 139). Labadi hopes that the inclusion on UNESCO’s lists may encourage enthusiasm by young people:

Considering that intangible cultural heritage is often seen in negative and pejorative terms as backward and pre-modern, the two UNESCO lists and register are surely some of the best measures to ensure accrued visibility, respect and awareness for intangible heritage. It is also a way to ensure that the younger generation becomes more interested in these manifestations and that they keep them viable through learning these traditions and passing them on to their own children (Labadi, 2013, 139).

The resounding representation inadvertently represented in the 2003 convention, and by heritage experts is that younger people are not interested in ICH involvement or continuance.

Intangible Cultural Heritage Mainly Occurs in the Developing World

The historical background to the adoption of the 2003 convention examined previously in this chapter may offer an explanation to the focus on the developing world. This study found that the majority of scholarly literature on ICH is situated in a developing world context (Leimgruber, 2010; Howell, 2013; Jacobs, 2014). The 2003 convention was an attempt to right the “imbalance” of neglected heritage that occurred mainly in the developing world (Aikawa-Faure, 2009, 15). The focus on developing countries is due to UNESCO historically favouring a Eurocentric version of heritage which favoured the built environment. According to Leimgruber:

The convention marks a break from earlier, Eurocentric ways of defining cultural heritage and is an attempt to redress past inequalities and dichotomies between North and South (Leimgruber, 2010, 165).

The acknowledgment of inequality in the management of world heritage and past official neglect of heritage expressions such as dance, handcrafts and rituals indicates that UNESCO was aware of the Eurocentric focus and made a concerted attempt to provide a more balanced world view of heritage (Smith & Akagawa, 2009). The developing world is specifically targeted in the wording of the document, with a direct reference acknowledging that UNESCO’s intention is to manage the

promoting of ICH “taking into account the special needs of developing countries” (Article 18:1, UNESCO, 2003, 8).

Critics argue that the desire to rebalance a world view has resulted in a shift in the opposite direction (Howell, 2013; Jacobs, 2014). The focus on promoting examples from developing countries has resulted in a neglect of many worthy Western ICH practices not being acknowledged in a formal manner (Howell, 2013, 104). The focus has transferred from a Eurocentric focus to a deliberate preference of expressions of ICH from the developing world (Howell, 2013). Jacobs also argues that the 2003 convention implicitly favours ICH from the developing world, with implicit rules, such as the “no electricity rule” (2014, 113). The rural and handcrafted are implied to be more authentic ICH than modern expressions in the comment “Why only shrimp fishers on horseback and not on tractors?” (Jacobs, 2014, 114). While European examples are not included on the list, non-European expressions are “embraced” (Jacobs, 2014, 113). What began as the noble intention to correct a wrong, has now progressed into a debate as to whether the developing world is over-represented.

Critics argue that since the 2003 convention was introduced, the celebration of ICH that has withstood colonisation has become the focus of official recognition (Stefano, Davis & Corsane, 2012, 3). A colonial past has been offered as a reason that nations such as Australia, Canada, United Kingdom and New Zealand have not ratified the 2003 convention (Leader-Elliott & Trimboli, 2012, 112).

Another issue that commentators have identified is that ICH from the developing world is not treated as equally valid and valuable as monumental heritage (Blake, 2008; Leimgruber, 2010; Labadi, 2013). The developing world is perceived as “subversions of dominant, canonical European norms” (Labadi & Long 2010, 4). According to Labadi, ICH is represented in the following way:

It is sometimes believed that intangible cultural heritage is “old, pre-industrial, unchanging or relatively stable over time, related to an ethnic identity (especially a marginalized or non-Western one) and regionally specific” (Labadi, 2013, 130).

Jacobs argues that European professional arts do not consider the 2003 convention relevant to them leaving ICH to “amateur arts, folk dance and music and all forms of ‘ethnic’ arts” (2014, 115).

The 2003 convention states that it intends to pay special attention to Indigenous communities. In regards to the specific targeting of Indigenous communities, the convention states:

Recognizing that communities, in particular indigenous communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals, play an important role in the production, safeguarding, maintenance and recreation of the intangible cultural heritage, thus helping to enrich cultural diversity and human creativity (UNESCO, 2003, 1).

By stating “in particular Indigenous communities” the convention separates the Indigenous, and indicates that Indigenous communities will be considered differently. The separation between “traditional societies and an unspecified other” is a concern (Leimgruber, 2010, 179). To compartmentalise Indigenous heritage as separate, infers the Indigenous heritage is not equivalent, relevant and valid for people outside the Indigenous group. The assumption that ICH refers to the Indigenous is demonstrated in Leader-Elliott and Trimboli’s article in which they argue that ICH in Australia is “particularly in regard to Indigenous heritage” and “especially as they relate to Indigenous culture” (2012, 121). ICH as being “perceived as an ad hoc category - the ethnological, the Indigenous and the characteristics of local societies” has been a critique of the 2003 convention (Florido-Corral, 2013, 59).

Another issue that has been received negatively by commentators, is the demand for Indigenous communities to prove their ICH is authentic and genuine (Lenzerini, 2011, 103; Boswell, 2008, 13). ICH customs and traditions are often positioned as “exotic” and for the performance of a Western audience (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009, 1). The practising community should not need to justify the value or significance of their ICH events to an outside agency such as UNESCO (Blake, 2008, 46).

The issue of UNESCO as a mechanism that promotes a heritage paradigm that has an underlining postcolonial globalising presence has been identified by a number of commentators (Bortolotto, 2010, 98; Labadi & Long, 2010, 11; Askew, 2010, 21). A number of powers are assigned via the convention. Commentators argue that UNESCO has placed itself in a position where it appears “in charge” of heritage management (Boswell, 2008, 12; Bortolotto, 2010, 97). The 2003 convention places authority with the administration of UNESCO. As the convention outlines, the final decision rests with the Director-General:

The instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval shall be deposited with the Director-General of UNESCO (Article 32:2, UNESCO, 2003, 12).

The 2003 convention grants the committee, made up of elected members of State Parties, a number of powers. The criteria to which expressions of ICH are measured in order to be included on UNESCO’s lists are decided by the committee. The convention states:

The Committee shall draw up and submit to the General Assembly for approval the criteria for the establishment, updating and publication of this Representative List (Article 16:2, UNESCO, 2003, 7).

The convention also grants the committee the authority to examine requests submitted by State Parties (Article 7, {g}, UNESCO, 2003, 4). Inscription onto the lists is dependent on approval of the committee (Article 7, {g:i}, UNESCO, 2003, 5). The convention also grants the committee the power to “provide guidance on best practice and make recommendations” in regards to a community safeguarding its ICH (Article 7, {b}, UNESCO, 2003, 4). The convention grants the committee the power to implement international assistance in any way it considers necessary (Article 20, {d}, UNESCO, 2003, 8).

The 2003 convention gives authority to the committee to decide on financial and technical assistance. The committee is given the power to grant low interest loans and donations (Article 21, {g}, UNESCO, 2003, 9). The convention states that all requests for assistance must be examined by the committee (Article 22:1, UNESCO, 2003, 9). These are significant powers, especially when access to funds depends on

the influence of the committee. These powers are considerable, especially in regard to ethnic minorities living within a State Party territory (Lenzerini, 2011, 115).

Conclusion

The historical move from viewing heritage as residing in the built environment to alternative understandings of heritage as also existing in the intangible was influenced by a number of factors. The need to shift the focus from a built Eurocentric version of heritage was appropriate to meet evolving ideas and notions of heritage. Changing social conditions and thought, as well as political reasons resulted in closer attention to the intangible. For the reasons covered in this chapter, a need to officially acknowledge and recognise heritage from the developing world was necessary. The desire to maintain and encourage ICH in the developing world is not the point of contestation in this chapter. The purpose is that the focus on ICH in the developing world has resulted in a neglect of studies and recognition of ICH examples from the Western world. This study addresses that deficiency.

This chapter outlined not only what is included in UNESCO's 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*, but also what is *not* included. The three assumptions embedded into the convention that were examined; that ICH is dying out, that the younger generation is disinterested in involvement and that ICH occurs predominately in the developing world do not explain; ICH that is increasing in incidence, flourishing, enthusiastic involvement by younger people and occurring in a Western context. The following four chapters explore the example of school departure rituals to demonstrate that ICH can be vibrant and performed by young people in a Western context.

Chapter Four: Intangible Cultural Heritage and Continuity with the Past

A strand of heritage discourse positions Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) as a means of accessing and providing continuity with the past (Bryan, 2000, 155). UNESCO's 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* highlights the link with the past by stating in the preamble that ICH is "recreated ... in response to a community's history" and provides "continuity" (UNESCO, 2003, 2). Heritage is a contested concept, and many versions of heritage exist, however, relevant to this chapter is the manner in which the past is represented (Askew, 2010, 21; Smith & Waterton, 2009, 289; Bortolotto, 2010, 98). Upholding traditions as a means of accessing the past as "tradition implies continuity with the past" is also a strong theme in heritage literature (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983, 5). Cultural identity is claimed to be created through "recall of historical experiences and cultural traditions" (Burrowes, 2013, 38). Cominelli and Greffe refer to ICH as the "bridge between past and present" (2012, 245). This is in support of the 2003 convention that states ICH provides "continuity" (Article 2:1, UNESCO, 2003, 2).

The majority of heritage literature focuses on the maintenance of existing ICH events, but the results of this study show that participants are overwhelmingly looking forward to their futures, rather than back at maintaining traditions, when they choose to be involved in ICH events. The findings of the study found that rather than sharing in ICH for the sake of the past, participants were involved for the sake of the future. Despite strong encouragement from the media (Neiger *et al.*, 2011; Lowenthal, 2013; LaTour *et al.*, 2010) and literature (Vicky, 2010; Shepherd, 2013) to idealise the past, this chapter argues that participants have a strong sense of the future when they perform ICH. Participants reported they were motivated to be involved in ICH to create an investment of memories which they can reflect on in their futures. Participants reported the major appeal of involvement in ICH was to create a future memory investment, rather than for the immediate present. An interviewed student responded, "It has to do with memories" and another, "to remember it all" when asked why have school departure events. A parent responded in interview that a reason for involvement is, "In your adult years, you can look back

on your high school years”. This is supported by the notion that “Heritage is about remembering” (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 294).

All the participants indicated that they would be creating material memories to keep for their futures. Physical items such as photographs and retained objects, such as tickets, clothing or mementos will be referred to through this chapter as material memories. Recording ICH into a material memory transfers the temporary emotions and feelings that will pass into a solid permanent object. A major study on the role of the material in memory is Pamuk’s (2009) fictional work *The Museum of Innocence*. Pamuk’s main character Kemal describes the phenomena:

The power of things inheres in the memories they gather up inside them, and also in the vicissitudes of our imagination, and our memory - of this there is no doubt. (Kemal in *The Museum of Innocence*, Pamuk, 2008, 324).

Retained items become material memories, as objects become a way of accessing, or activating, the past, personally or collectively (Edwards, 1999, 228). The creation of material memories is evidence that participants are consciously aware that they are constructing a past, to reflect upon in their futures. Material memories are “an act of faith in the future” (Edwards, 1999, 222). When asked during interview if they would be having their photograph taken at the school ball, one student immediately replied enthusiastically “Definitely” whilst her friend supported her comment with “For sure”. When asked about the importance of keeping mementos, one student stated, “I think that it will have a lot of memories when you see them later on in life. It could be something as little as a picture and it will bring back those memories that you need”. Material memories are retained with the purpose of being carried with the participant into their future. One student explained why he would be keeping his leavers’ jacket; “For me, I think it is valuable when I leave high school, I would love to have piece of something to remember the high school days and everything” and another stated, “I have already planned to hang it up and display it” (his leavers’ jacket).

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section will consider the participants’ construction of a past through the manufacture of ICH as a future

memory investment (LaTour *et al.*, 2010; Smith & Waterton, 2009). The second section will consider the creation of material memories, or physical items that are retained for the dedicated purpose of remembering (Edwards, 1999, 222; Batchen, 2004, 36; Willumson, 2004, 65). This section will be divided into two sub-sections. The first sub-section will focus on objects as material memories, and the second sub-section will focus on photographs as material memories. The last section will examine the deliberate selection of retained material memories.

Future Memory Investment

Heritage literature favours the view that ICH provides a link with the past. A strong focus on the link ICH provides to past traditions features in many articles (Okpyo, 2013; Bozanic & Buljubasic, 2012; Margolies, 2011). Scholars evoke the connection with the past with the use of language such as “performances of commemoration and remembering” (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 293). According to Lenzerini, the main value of ICH is providing communities with a sense of “identity and continuity” (Lenzerini, 2011, 110). The past is represented in the media and popular culture as a place in which things were better and more pleasant (LaTour *et al.*, 2010; Vicky, 2011). As the focus on the past, as a positive nostalgic force, increases in popular culture through television shows, cinema, retro-style fashions and cars (Lowenthal, 2013, 34), the pressure to favour the past increases. Lowenthal (2013) identifies the increase in television shows and re-makes of movies as an indication that reviving the past is a popular notion. The current television schedule lists a large number of heritage themed programs such as, *The Antiques Roadshow*, *Downtown Abbey*, *American Pickers* and *It's Worth What?* Popular media represents that past as:

... times of lost purity and simplicity, lapsed immediacy and certitude, in some Golden Age of classical serenity, Christian faith, pastoral plenitude, or childhood innocence. Sojourning in the past seems preferable to living in the present (Lowenthal, 2012, 2).

The past represented as an ideal place provides encouragement to look to the past, as the example below shows. Vicky writes of a museum exhibition:

An exhibition with a storyline drawn from the sixties easily appeals to people who can relate to this colourful era; the elderly who have lived through the 1960s would be eager to come and reminisce their childhood days (Vicky, 2010, 21).

The past is depicted in popular culture as a place to seek comfort:

Only in the past, as in the womb, it is warm and safe; only in the past are there symbols and victories that people can understand (Lowenthal, 2013, 35).

The past is also used in popular culture to create a sanctuary:

If we can look to the past, and preserve memories of belonging and security, we are better able to face the uncertainty of the present (Boswell, 2008, 18).

One explanation for clinging to the past is perhaps an expression of searching for “familiarity and stability” in a rapidly changing world (Leimgruber, 2010, 172).

The participants of school rituals reported a strong sense of belief in the future as a motivation for ICH involvement. The participants were involved in order to create a future memory investment. The term investment is appropriate, as in the monetary context, it implies that the memories will increase in value over time. One parent explained having a photograph was, “Extremely important, I think it is one of those things we will go back to, and replay again as being an important milestone in her life”. Another parent responded, “We have photos in our album at home; definitely it is a good memento”. Of material memories in the form of objects, such as the leavers’ jackets, many participants identified it as an item that would be kept for the future. A parent explained, “Definitely, she would keep her leavers’ jacket. It is one of the prize possessions in her wardrobe that she likes to wear. It is a good stepping stone for her achievement and her life, in that period of her life”.

In *High School Musical 3* (Walt Disney, 2008) the musical number dedicated to the ball has the cast performing a song entitled *Night to Remember*. The lyrics reinforce the students’ notion that participating in the school ritual of the ball will generate pleasant memories. The sole purpose of involvement emphasised by the lyrics is to remember.

'A Night to Remember'

*It's gonna be a night to remember
It's gonna be the night to last forever
It's gonna be a night to remember
It's gonna be the night to last forever
(Last forever)
It's gonna be our night (you know it)
To remember (all time)
Come on now, big fun (big fun)
It's gonna be the night (love it)
To last forever (the rest of our lives)
We'll never ever ever forget*

'A Night to Remember' from *High School Musical 3: Senior Year* (Walt Disney, 2008).

The students responded in interview that they intended to remember school departure rituals. When asked in interview, "Why have a school ball?" the overwhelming response contained references to the reflections in the future. One student stated that the ball was valuable as it was, "Something you could look back on" and that the leavers' jackets have the capacity to, "Hold lots of memories when you see them later on in life". One student stated that the events were held, "To remember it all, and that we have achieved Year 12". One student referred to the future when considering the school ball, saying, "It is preparing us for the future, our wedding day".

Students anticipated ICH events to be positive and something that would create happy memories to reflect upon. Students used the word "fun", which denotes that this was a special occasion, separate from the usual everyday school activity. "I think it has to do with memories; our last year of school. Makes the last year more fun", was one student's response. Students identified the reason for having the school ball was, "To celebrate our work" and "Give us a break, celebrate, have fun". It is the severing from the everyday school routine that creates the environment required for manufacturing memories (Cole, 2004, 34). It is the extra-ordinary, rather than the

ordinary which the students identify will stay in their memories. Key to creating an event for the purposes of memory creation is that it punctuates the normality of everyday school life. Nora notes the importance of punctuating normality for the manufacture of memories:

And the observance of a commemorative minute of silence, an extreme example of a strictly symbolic action, serves as a concentrated appeal to memory by literally breaking a temporal continuity (Nora, 1989, 19).

Teachers were conscious that a purposely created event, that is separate from the normal school routine, can allow students the opportunity to manufacture positive memories of their school experience. One teacher stated, “I would just like them to have a good time”. Teachers stated that they viewed the ball primarily as an event that was separated from school in that it was designed to give the students a break from the academic sphere of school. One teacher responded, “I think having the school ball is a good idea as it builds morale amongst the students and it builds a positive culture for them at school and to look forward to an event like that. It is a bit of a reward”.

The utmost significance of the past in the future was revealed by some students responding in the past tense, although they were yet to attend the ball when interviewed. Students replied in past tense that having a photograph taken was valuable because, “It helped you remember how amazing it was” and “How pretty you looked”. The use of past tense implies that the students are aware they are creating a reservoir of memories from which to draw from in the future.

The students were conscious that their current stage of life was coming to an end. Students are aware that they may lose touch with each other, or may never see each other again once school is over, so therefore desire to create a memory as a group. “I’ll never see most of these people ever again in my life”, states one student. A parent explained, “You just don’t know after school if she will ever see most of these kids again, so at least she will have some kind of memory, and have a good time together”. Memories of the time spent as a recognised group was also mentioned by a teacher who stated, “Firstly it is something that brings them together as a group, gives them positive memories of schooling and I think those positive memories are

important because it determines their attitude and values towards education". This notion is also echoed in the 2003 convention with the statement included in the preamble:

Considering the invaluable role of the intangible cultural heritage as a factor in bringing human beings closer together and ensuring exchange and understanding among them (UNESCO, 2003, 3).

The impending end to this stage of their lives influences their desire to create a memory that they are able to reflect on in their futures. The students are aware that they are creating their future memories.

Parents were also conscious that this was a phase in their student's life that was coming to a close, and that involvement in an official event was valuable for their child's future reflections. A parent explained the importance of the ball as, "I'm a big believer in having special occasions to look back on, and in your adult years, to look back on your high school years. It's a coming of age". The importance of recording the event in the form of a photograph was explained as, "They will put photos in frames on their walls. It is a lovely way to look back on". The use of the term "look back on" indicates the intention to create a future reflection is deliberate. This supports UNESCO beliefs that people fundamentally want to conserve ICH. The convention states:

Being aware of the universal will and the common concern to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage of humanity (UNESCO, 2003, 1).

The findings of the study were that participants utilised ICH expressions to create memories in which they planned to reflect on in their futures. In contradiction with much current heritage literature (Lowenthal, 2012, 2013; Cominelli & Greffe, 2012; Burrowes, 2013; Neiger *et al.*, 2011) participants reported they were involved in ICH for future memories, rather than to create a sense of continuity with the past.

Material Memories

The dedication to the future is apparent in the creation of material memories. The creation of material memories, in the form of photographs or kept mementos, is evidence that the participants intend to remember the event in the future. The participants' intention is to carry the material memories with them, into their futures. As ICH is temporary, the material memory is the connection to the event, which will outlast the event itself. Material memories become precious to participants due to their proximity to the ICH event. Material memories become precious to the participant because they are consecrated with residual emotions that develop a patina due to its presence at the ICH event (Cameron & Gatewood, 2004, 67; Monks, 2013, 53; Edwards & Hart, 2004, 2).

The awareness of a moment in time that is not able to last, yet wishing to extend the experience beyond its natural demise, is the motivation for recording ICH from the intangible to the tangible (Monks, 2013, 52). Material memories attempt to change the temporary into the permanent. A necessary criterion of material memory is that it must be personally authentic or genuine in the emotional sense to the participant. It is the authenticity that awards the object an aura, therefore making the object valuable to the participant (Pearce, 1995, 291). The act of keeping material memories demonstrates that the participant intends to recall the ICH event in their futures. Material memories will now be examined in two sections. The first section focuses on objects, and the second concentrates on photographs as material memories.

Objects

20 years ago I attended the concert of a band I had followed since I was a teenager. I was fortunate enough to be in the right place when the drummer slid his drumstick across the floor in my direction. The drumstick is not signed, and there is no proof that the drumstick is any different from any other drumstick, except I know that Clem Burke, the drummer for *Blondie*, used it in concert. The value is derived from my knowledge that the drumstick is the authentic item. The drumstick's connection with time and space; the fact it 'was there', awards the drumstick its aura. I now keep

that drumstick tucked safely in my drawer. The act of keeping, and the precise care and attention that is given to keeping, is what gives objects their significance (Pitelka, 2008, 3). Pitelka (2008) uses Japanese tea bowls to demonstrate her point that objects are consciously saved for the future. The bowls are carefully wrapped in soft material and then stored in handmade inscribed wooden boxes. Authenticity is crucial in the manufacture of material memories. It is the sense of possessing the authentic article that is connected in time and space to the ICH event which awards a material object its value to the participant. A material object becomes significant due to the meaning it holds for the participant:

It has become a commonly accepted truth that the meanings attributed to objects are not inherent to the objects themselves. Rather, the meanings that are associated with any item or work of human creation are the result of cultural and historical processes through which that significance has been constructed (De Caroli, 2008, 21).

Almost always it is crucial that the item ‘was there’ present at the time for it to be considered emotionally authentic. The object is said to “bear the traces of lived history” (Hepburn, 2010, 5). The object’s presence at the event results in it becoming “enmeshed with subjective, embodied and sensuous interactions” that occurred during the event to which the object is connected (Edwards & Hart, 2004, 2).

In many cases the physicality of the item outlasts our recollection of the event. The function and purpose of taking into the future, a material remnant of ICH involvement, is to trigger or guarantee a future memory recall. Of all the senses, touch is the most closely linked with our emotions and feelings (Stewart, 1999, 31). People retain a commemorative object from the event to document their attachment to the location and mood at the specific moment. In *The Museum of Innocence*, the main character, Kemal, describes the desire to retain a physical representation of an emotion that will pass:

But to designate this as my happiest moment is to acknowledge that it is far in the past, that it will never return, and that awareness of this, therefore of that very moment is painful. We can bear the pain only by possessing something that belongs to that instant. These mementos preserve the colours, texture, images, and delights as they were more faithfully, in fact, than can those who accompanied us through those moments (Pamuk, 2008, 73).

So what motivates people to take objects into their futures that to them have become precious? Objects serve the memory in three ways (Kwint, 1999, 2). Firstly objects act as triggers of memory (Freund & Thomson, 2011, 3). As objects have the capacity to physically outlast our own thoughts about them, they serve to ‘be there’ as proof once we have forgotten or lost focus on the event for which they were created (Batchen, 2004, 37). Objects as mnemonic devices have the capacity to operate as physical maps of our past, as objects collected over the years recall the period in our lives when the objects were significant (Batchen, 2004, 41). Due to this, objects feature in our recall of past events, especially distant or childhood memories (LaTour *et al.*, 2010). Objects have the capacity to be a passage between the generations. Items such as jewellery are passed down through the generations, often becoming more precious in the passing of time (Kwint, 1999, 3).

Secondly, objects stimulate memories within us, which are otherwise repressed, dormant or forgotten (Freund & Thomson, 2011, 4; Batchen, 2004, 32). The memory is activated by our association with a physical object or reminder of involvement. The benefit of retaining a physical object is that its materiality enables it to endure, even if it is not foremost in our minds at the time. Objects stimulate memory as they exist in relation to other understandings and contexts (Edwards & Hart, 2004, 2). Material memories have the capacity to not only remind us of the event itself, but the people and circumstances of the event (Freund & Thiessen, 2011, 28; Tinkler, 2011, 48).

Thirdly, objects form records. Objects have the capacity to store information beyond our own individual experience (Kwint, 1999). In the case of a personal object, it records our connection with events we experienced through specific connection with space and time. It is the perceived authenticity and the connection in time and space with the participant that makes an object precious. The object’s connection with time and space is what impacts on participants keeping items as explained:

They are the objects we collect and preserve, not for what they may reveal to us as material documents, or for any visible aesthetic quality, but for their association, real or imagined, with some person, place, or event endowed with special sociocultural magic (Maines & Glynn, 1993, 10).

An example of one such item may be a wedding ring. The wedding ring can function as a record of the intangible emotions felt on the day of the marriage ceremony, yet it also serves as a record to those who understand its greater symbolism of a person in a committed relationship.

There are objects that function to form records by connection with a publicly shared event (Latham, 2013, 4). The authentic item has the capacity to evoke “collective associations” with the past (Cameron & Gatewood, 2004, 67). One such example is the association with time and space of the Berlin Wall being brought down. The remaining fragments of the wall became valuable for their association with the symbolic tearing down of the wall, not the monetary value.

The neo-tradition of the leavers’ jackets provides students with a physical memento of their school experience. During interview, one student remarked, “It’s like one of those things you buy when you are on holiday, what are they called? Souvenirs, yeah the leavers’ jackets are basically a souvenir from school”. Another student stated the leavers’ jackets were valuable, “to remember; everyone’s name is on it” and “most of the time they have everyone’s names on, to remember who was there”. Another student added, “It is memorabilia to remember we have achieved year 12”. One student who planned to mount and display his leavers’ jacket stated he viewed it as, “It is memorabilia to remember we have achieved Year 12. It’s a piece of something to remember, when I leave high school I would love to have a piece of something to remember the high school days”.

Parents also share in the sentiment of retaining a physical reminder. One parent stated her son purchased his leavers’ jacket planning to keep it in the future. When asked why her son would keep it, she replied, “Keep it for memories, for good memories. He still has his Year Seven T-shirt. He has kept it just for memories”. Another parent confirmed that her child had kept her leavers’ jacket and still wears it. “She loved her leavers’ jacket; it was really important to her. After two years she still wears it”. A young teacher, who had been a student himself during the introduction of the leavers’ jackets, explained why he had kept his leavers’ jacket and why it was significant to him seven years after completing his schooling. “A lot of my friends signed the jacket so therefore I have a lot of lasting memories from those friends of

mine. Also that was a form of my identify back then, wearing that jacket, so it is looking back on what I was wearing at that time and how I felt at the time, is connected back to looking at that jacket”. He also explained why some of his friends continued to wear their jackets long after completing high school. “Some people wore them after school because it made them feel proud and part of the community. It made them feel older”. Another teacher observed, “For a couple of years they might wear it after school and when we have reunions kids tend to drag them out”

Objects, if taken care of, will often outlast our own lives. Mundane or low monetary objects become precious because of their connection in time and space with a person we have had a relationship with. Margery Williams explains the phenomena of a toy becoming precious and real to a child in her classic 1922 children’s novel *The Velveteen Rabbit*. In the same manner an object that is deemed authentic, and connected to an ICH event becomes precious and real to the participant:

Real isn't how you are made," said the Skin Horse. "It's a thing that happens to you. When someone loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become real (*The Velveteen Rabbit*, Margery Williams, 1st published 1922, this edition 1970, 14).

The participant consecrates the object with their expectations, emotions and hopes until, just as happened in *The Velveteen Rabbit*, the object becomes real, precious and irreplaceable (Monks, 2013).

Photographs

Photographs and souvenirs belong to a group of objects formed especially to remember (Edwards, 1999, 222; Batchen, 2004, 36; Willumson, 2004, 65; Schwartz, 2004, 16). The act of taking a photograph expresses a desire to remember. Clichés on photography such as “frozen moments in time” and “captured the moment” are actually cultural expectations of the role that photography plays in memory reproduction (Edwards, 1999, 223). Although photographs have the capacity to contain multiple meanings, photographs are often approached as captured reality (Freund & Thiessen, 2011, 28). Even in a digital age, the appeal of the photograph is

its tactile materiality (Edwards, 1999, 227; Sassoon, 2004, 199; Hanganu, 2004, 164). People can caress, hold and even kiss a photograph.

Photographs also confirm (Harvey, 1989, 313). When asked why it was important to have a photograph taken to remember the ball, the student replied, “To prove that it was real”. A parent who intends to keep a photograph remarked, “At her 21st it would be one of those photos we go back and replay again as being one of those important milestones in her life”.

The study of photographs as mnemonic devices deserves greater explanation than is possible in this chapter, but a brief overview of the field is necessary. Photographs function as mnemonic devices and have the capacity to function as “memory prompts” (Freund & Thiessen, 2011, 28). Their studies show a greater detailed recall of the past when photographs are used to stimulate memory (2011, 4). Tinkler (2011) argues that photographs trigger memories in two ways. The first phase is the memory response, which contains both reaction and consideration of the context of the photograph. The second phase is the processing of recall matter. This involves visual and other sensory fragments, flashbacks, knowledge, emotions and meanings of the photograph (Tinkler, 2011, 48). The second phase involves an awareness of the materiality of the photograph (Edwards & Hart, 2004). Photographs not only serve to trigger the memory, but can also trigger social beliefs and values of the photograph’s context (Hanganu, 2004, 165). A teacher explained he had kept a photograph of his own school ball, “For memories’ sake. Quite often we use photos to trigger memories, so to see that photo brings back a lot of memories, of the person I went with, how I was feeling at the time, the money that went in, what we were wearing”. A parent responded with a reference to remembering, “She might not see those kids again. She will be able to remember those people, so I think it is a good idea”.

When asked why it was important to record the event via photograph, two students referred to their imagined futures by referring to as yet unborn generations. A student remarked that it was important to have a photograph taken at the ball, “to show the grandkids” while another remarked that the photographs could be shown, “to your own kids”. The consciousness of the future is evident in the comment “People plan ahead nostalgically” (Lowenthal, 2013, 34). The longevity of photographs means that

they can be applied to a trans-generational situation. People are able to view deceased ancestors whom they never met through an heirloom photograph.

The underlying essential factor is that the participants attempt to capture the temporary condition that will pass and transfer it into a permanent state, so that it can be transported with them to their futures. The transference of the invisible emotions, hopes and ideas into the visible photograph provides solid evidence and tangible proof that the event existed for the purpose of future reflection.

Selecting Future Memories to Create a Past

Although photographs can serve to trigger memories, the photographs that are retained are selected. “Decisions are made about what is kept for the album” (Freund & Thiessen, 2011, 3). Interviewed parents commented that the value of having a formal photograph taken at the school ball was that the resulting photographs could be displayed showing their child in the best possible light. One proud mother stated in interview, “It’s lovely to have a photo of them that you can show off with them beautifully dressed, even for the boys”. Another mother stated, “It is important memento to keep because they were all dressed up and they look so lovely and she looked so beautiful and all grown up”. One student stated in interview that her photograph was important to have for the future as she could reflect back and remember, “How pretty I was”. Parents in interview identified that they valued the opportunity of keeping their child’s ball photograph as it represented their child’s appearance in the most positive manner. One mother explained, “It is one of those occasions, like their wedding day, when they are looking as good as they are ever going to look. All polished and beautiful”.

The connotation is that the photograph is in opposition from the general way their child would appear. The preparation of the ball means the student’s appearance is altered beyond their normal, usual appearance. The student who stated in the past tense, “How pretty I was” infers that in her future she expects to be no longer pretty. The inferred awareness that the condition is temporary and will pass motivates the desire for the event to be photographed. The students recognise that it is a temporary

phase of their lives, with one student stating that it was important to keep a photograph, “for memories in that happy stage of our lives”. To refer to “that happy stage” denotes the student’s belief that it is a temporary condition.

Parents all responded positively to the importance and value of having a photograph taken to record the event of both the school ball and graduation. One parent reported, “We purchased photos online from the professional photographer and we have them in an album at home”. The number of parents purchasing from the professional photographer is disputed by a teacher who had the task of organising the ball. The teacher noticed the trend of students having professional photographs taken at the venue, yet the number of photographs ordered was noticeably low. The teacher explains, “Most the students took their own photos and you could see that in the uptake of the professional ones. Not many people bought them. So I think it is more important for the parents to keep, like their year seven photos and their kindy photos. It is like their pathway through life”. The teacher accredited the low purchase of professional photographs to the fact that parents may have already taken photographs prior to their child leaving for the ball.

I offer another explanation for the low sales of professionally taken photographs. The resulting evidence (photograph) does not match their fantasy (dreams, ideas and expectations) of their memory of their ball experience. It has been suggested that memory is created by the participant to meet their own desires (Leslie, 1999, 113). The argument presented by Halbwachs (1992) that memory is formed under the pressure of society is applicable. Through the media, students are presented with the image of the perfectly beautiful or handsome belle or beau, and the ball as the best night of their lives. Students eagerly line up on the night to have their transformation recorded by photography from average school student, into beautiful king or queen. The transformation, aided by hours at the hairdresser, excessive amounts of make-up and specific attire can only be temporary. The professional photographs are viewed for the first time some distance from when the event took place, thus giving the image time to conflict with the student’s memory of their appearance on the night. Unlike the parents who capture the moment ‘on the spot’ prior to the student leaving for the ball, the professional photographs are posed and static.

One possible explanation is that the perceived reality of the photograph leaves the student disappointed about how they looked as it does not correspond with the student's recollection. In their enthusiasm to create happy memories, participants may be inclined to either ignore, imagine an alternative or choose to forget aspects of the night that do not align with their presupposed expectations. In order for some things to be remembered, other things must be forgotten (Assmann, 2008, 97). The deliberate action of remembering requires dedication from the participants:

If we concede that forgetting is the normality of personal and cultural life, then remembering is the exception, which— especially in the cultural sphere— requires special and costly precautions (Assmann, 2008, 98).

Barthes claims the rejection of a photograph demands its physical removal (Barthes, 1981, 93). The professional photograph has the potential to make the student feel disappointed that they did not look as glamorous or beautiful as they believed they did on the night. The cost involved in purchasing the professional photographs could also be a factor for the low sales. Regardless of whether the photographs were professionally taken or taken at home, both parents and students stressed the desire to record the ICH event in photographic form in order to reflect upon it in their futures.

Conclusion

The creation of memories was the most commonly cited desired outcome of ICH involvement. Participants reported motivation for being involved in ICH is to create memories. The participants reported that they primarily considered the future, rather than the past, when choosing to be involved in an ICH event. Literature on the topic of ICH has a strong focus on maintaining and preserving the connection with the past (Article 2:1, UNESCO, 2003, 2; Lowenthal, 2013; Smith & Waterton, 2009, 294). Participants did not focus on looking to the past or feel a sense of responsibility to maintaining tradition. The notion of upholding or adhering to tradition, as a way to link with the past, was not the participants' intention.

Participants reported the desire to manufacture both mental and physical memories, which they reported would be valuable to have for their future lives. The recording of ICH into a material memory transfers the temporary moment that will pass, into the

physical retainable item. What awards the material memory its precious status is its connection in time and space with the intangible emotions, feelings and beliefs of ICH involvement. The purpose of creating both physical and mental memories is so that they can be recalled in the participants' futures. This reveals the participants' enthusiasm and dedication to the future.

The act of involvement is deliberately undertaken to construct a past, with the future in mind. Creation of memories often involves other people, or creating a memory as part of a group. This supports the 2003 convention which states ICH creates the opportunity for "exchange and understanding" between the participants (UNESCO, 2003, 3). The participants' reactions indicate an enthusiasm for the future. The participants reported that they are consciously aware that ICH involvement will mean more to them in their futures than it does in the present.

Constructed into the proceedings of the ICH event is the opportunity for the manufacture of material memories. The formal mementos of school are present at all major school rituals. Professional photographers are present at the school ball for students to record the event with a portrait. The school often supplies key rings or engraved glasses on the tables at the school ball for students to retain after the event. Sashes, certificates and pins are provided at graduation ceremonies for students to keep. Lastly, leavers' jackets are deliberately designed to be a material item that students can keep once they have left school. The creations of such items are driven by the awareness of the temporary condition that will soon pass. The material memory, consecrated with the emotions, feelings and beliefs of the event, remains to extend the moment in space and time, into the participants' futures; it shows the link between the past and preparation for the future (Monks, 2013; Edwards & Hart, 2004, 2). The following chapter will consider the perceived threat to ICH of globalisation.

Chapter Five: Intangible Cultural Heritage and Globalisation

The previous chapter discussed the link heritage has with the past. This chapter focuses on the perceived threat to heritage in the future of globalisation. One version of heritage presented through scholarly literature is that Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) is being eroded by the effects of globalisation (Carbonell, 2012; Lenzerini, 2010; Leimgruber, 2011; Labadi & Long, 2010). In the preamble to the *Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003), globalisation is identified as a grave threat to ICH. The 2003 convention states:

Recognizing that the processes of globalization and social transformation, alongside the conditions they create for renewed dialogue among communities, also give rise, as does the phenomenon of intolerance, to grave threats of deterioration, disappearance and destruction of the intangible cultural heritage, in particular owing to a lack of resources for safeguarding such heritage (UNESCO, 2003, 1).

Western Australia is a multicultural state. The school in which the study took place is a multicultural environment. Although the effects of globalisation may be viewed negatively by some scholars (Leimgruber, 2010; Lenzerini, 2011; Kurin, 2007) this chapter argues that as a result of exposure to popular culture through the popular media, a collective memory of school departure rituals is formed. Shared collective memory allows for common understandings of ICH involvement to develop. Students actively engage in developing and revitalising ICH under the influence of outside sources. The common understandings of ICH meanings are shared amongst the group because they are derived from shared sources. The shared sources provide a “narrative template” of what the event *should* be like (Wertsch, 2002, 5; Wertsch, 2008, 140; Marcel & Mucchielli, 2008, 144). The 2003 convention was adopted to safeguard ICH against globalising forces, however, the preamble acknowledges that globalisation and social change allow for “renewed dialogue among communities” and also “recreation” (UNESCO, 2003, 1). Multiple interpretations have always been possible but globalisation has the potential to broaden options as it offers different and new points of reference and comparisons (Labadi & Long, 2010, 5). That globalisation is feared to be creating one mass culture, yet allows for multiple

interpretations is recognised as paradoxical in this study. I acknowledge the irony that many of the sources that contribute to the formation of a collective memory of school departure rituals are derived from American media forms. When considering the forces of globalisation, it may appear a contradiction to analyse an example that has been influenced by American popular media. As an example of local culture, school departure rituals demonstrate the paradox of globalisation and provincial influences on personal identity and belonging. Local culture is expressed as commitment to attitudes and beliefs of the group which leads to “unity and social cohesion and overall becomes a part of individual's identity” (Mahammadbakhsh *et al.*, 2012, 17). Students extract aspects that appeal to them from a global medium, such as film and apply them to localised ICH. The additions will only be significant once consent of the group has been established, demonstrating the results of global influence on localised ICH. The irony that school departure rituals have increased due to the outside influence of American popular culture, in particular films, indicates the students’ dedication towards providing a common template for a collective experience in a diverse population. In the case of school departure rituals local culture is strengthened by the influence of American popular culture rather than depleted by it. The same ironic reaction to outside influence working to reinforce local culture was also observed in the study of international music on local culture;

It seems ironic that the world’s consumers have become more interested in their domestic music even as they have become better able to gain access to the world’s music (Ferreira & Waldfogel, 2010, 23).

In opposition to the theory that globalisation may deplete unique characteristics of local culture (Pekajova & Novosak, 2010) is another approach which anticipates the increase in local identity and concludes that globalisation has reinforced ethnic distinctions and identities. This approach believes that the increase of inter-cultural communication has resulted in a strengthening of local awareness (Mahammadbakhsh *et al.*, 2012, 17). Mahammadbakhsh *et al.* use the example of how Mitsubishi is advertised to the international market emphasising identifiable indicators of Japanese culture and identity (2012, 17).

A very important aspect in acceptance of introduced influences from American popular culture on local culture is that the students feel they have control and

ownership. This point is reinforced by Mahammadbakhsh *et al.* in their study on local culture in Iran. People resisted the globalising process in imposed government interventions indicating that they felt “inferior” and pressured to surrender their own cultural identity in preference to global cultural influences. Yet when people were able to apply a “redefined native cultural concepts” to aspects of introduced influences of globalisation, these practices were accepted (Mahammadbakhsh *et al.*, 2012, 20). That school departure rituals are taking the cue from American popular culture does not necessarily indicate that the students are simply copying what they have seen in films, but may indicate the students’ dedication towards creating a common experience amongst their own identifiable group. The example of school departure rituals demonstrates that influences by international popular media can have a vitalising effect encouraging young people to become involved and in some cases to be the instigators. ICH is invigorated by young people taking ownership of aspects of ICH by applying new technologies that translate meanings that satisfy the requirements of the group (Cabral, 2011; Pietrobruno (a), 2013). ICH events that are driven by young people, using alternative methods of transmission, are not particular to school departure rituals. Discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six, ICH that is driven and re-interpreted by young people is evident in examples of ICH from; South Africa (Marschall, 2014), Emirates (El-Aswad, 2014), Cambodia (Hang, 2014), Korea (Park, 2014) and Taiwan (Yuan, 2014).

Globalisation offers different and new points of reference and comparisons (Labadi & Long, 2010, 5). This chapter argues that as cultures are exposed to new influences through intercultural connections, opportunities for change and growth are possible. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section will examine the concept of globalisation. The second section of this chapter will focus on the formation of collective memory. The third section will examine how the collective memory builds expectations of how ICH *should* be. The role of the international media will be considered in the third section. The last section will focus on the sense of belonging afforded by shared experience.

Globalisation

Labadi and Long (2010) argue that globalisation is the greater interaction between the nations of the world. The concern of commentators is that globalisation will result in a homogenous culture, with minority cultures being absorbed or negatively affected (Kurin, 2007, 11; Labadi & Long, 2010, 2; Boswell, 2008, 14; Lenzerini, 2011, 103). Of minority cultures becoming engulfed by the interests of dominant cultures, Lenzerini argues:

... characteristic of our contemporary world, in the context of which the cultural archetypes and interests of dominant societies globalize, to the prejudice of minority cultures, leading to cultural hegemony and uniformity at the local, national, regional, and international level. Such a process will eventually lead to the crystallization of uniform and stereotyped cultural models and to the contextual mortification of the value of cultural diversity (Lenzerini, 2011, 103).

Globalisation is the consequence of a number of social conditions, such as economic reasons and ideological manifestations (Labadi & Long, 2010, 4; Leimgruber, 2010, 177; Hodder, 2010, 863). The exposure to popular culture through television, films and media have been identified as conduits through which globalisation is able to spread (Leimgruber, 2010, 180; Zelizer, 2011, 31; Frosh, 2011, 128). It has been said that information technology in our digital age drives globalisation as steam powered the industrial revolution (Labadi & Long, 2010, 1). In the example of school departure rituals, the key transmitter of globalisation is positioned as popular media, but there are many other drivers of globalisation. One suggestion is that free market capitalism is the main propagator of globalisation (Labadi & Long, 2010, 3). Another suggestion is that nationalist agendas forefront globalisation (Askew, 2010, 22). The role of the media cannot be ignored and will be examined later in this chapter. Political and economic elements also have a globalising effect. Demands of modern life also have resulted in people migrating from their local areas and nation states. The younger generations of immigrants are born into the adopted culture. The younger generation can become estranged from their parent cultural and may be disinterested in studying ICH skills (Junko, 2011, 87). Due to forces of globalisation, transmission of ICH has been severed:

In fact, intensification of intercultural contacts, which in many cases has translated into cultural prevarication and the imposition of certain cultural models over others, has quickly put under threat the capacity of the oldest generations to transmit their knowledge and knowhow to the youngest (Lenzerini, 2011, 102).

Minority groups that once had their own separate localised ICH are now blended into larger communities who have their own distinctive ICH (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009, 11). The view is held that traditional knowledge is being “destroyed by what is happening in the modern world” (Carbonell, 2012, 64).

Globalisation is often represented as the dominance of “hegemonic Western culture” (Leimgruber, 2010, 177). The influence of popular media forms from a Western paradigm on school departure rituals is evident, but Bortolotto argues that “globalisation does not equate to Westernisation” (2010, 99). The concept of ICH is based on the Japanese notion of “*mukei bunkazi*” (Kurin, 2007, 10; Bortolotto, 2010, 99). The *International Journal of Intangible Heritage* is based in Korea, so intercultural connections and influences are not necessarily Western.

Although UNESCO has identified globalisation as a threat, it also acknowledges that it is able to create conditions for “renewed dialogue” (UNESCO, 2003, 1). It is this aspect that contributes to the opportunity to acquire knowledge of other cultures (Bortolotto, 2010, 97). Participants in the study, however, identified the media as the primary source from which they based their expectations of ICH involvement. Some of the textual resources cited by participants as influential are American media forms, one of the phenomena the 2003 convention was adopted to protect against. The findings of the study were that rather than destroying ICH, the effects of globalisation and exposure to the media can enhance ICH by allowing alternative points of reference, and providing a common experience in a diverse population. This chapter argues that participants engage in collective memory through shared texts, but personalise it to their own individual situations. The students interpret the textual resources they have available, but apply what is a global notion, such as the school ball, to make it a personal and intimate event. The 2003 convention cited intolerance as a danger; however, this study found ICH provided commonality in an ethnically diverse environment. The participants reported that they were able to establish a sense of belonging through the shared experience of ICH.

Collective Memory

Globalisation, or one homogeneous culture (Labadi & Long, 2010, 3; Leimgruber, 2010, 164; Logan, 2009, 198), is viewed as a threat to ICH by UNESCO, yet this study argues that global influence aids in the creation of a shared collective memory in which participants can find belonging in a diverse world. Collective memory is said to be formed under the influence of social phenomena, rather than having a physiological base (Olick *et. al.*, 2011, 45-46). Halbwachs argues, “The mind reconstructs its memories under the pressure of society” (1992, 51, [translated from *Les cadres sociaux de la memoire*, 1952]). An individual makes sense of the past by understanding the beliefs of the group (Halbwachs, 1992, 40-51). This study draws on the model of collective memory developed by James Wertsch (2000, 2002, 2008) who argues that collective memory is “textually mediated” memory (Wertsch, 2002, 5). Wertsch’s study is based on the belief that exposure to textual resources is the primary method in construction of collective memory. Of the influence that textual resources have on the development of collective memory Wertsch explains his model:

Instead of being grounded in direct, immediate experience of events, the sort of collective memory at issue in this case is what I shall term “textually mediated.” Specifically, it is based on “textual resources” provided by others – narratives that stand in, or mediate, between the events and our understanding of them (Wertsch, 2002, 5).

By Wertsch’s definition collective memory is the interplay between the textual resources we have available to us and our understanding of what they mean and the manner in which we apply our understanding. Collective memory operates as a framework from which individuals can locate, conceptualise and make sense of their own personal autobiographical memories. Halbwachs (1992) argues that participants form their expectations and beliefs from the information that is derived from membership affiliation. It is through the contact with shared textual resources that the participants’ expectations and meanings are developed. Sharing a common understanding of the textual resources allows for commonality to develop amongst a diverse group. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the textual resources that are shared in the example of school departure rituals are mainly through media forms. I acknowledge the paradoxical situation of students sharing in a collective memory

which is often influenced by American media. However, I argue that sharing in a common understanding, provided by the collective memory, provides a sense of belonging in a diverse population.

While conducting interviews, I was intrigued to find that participants articulated a developed sense of what ICH involvement would look and feel like long before they were participants themselves. The commonalities within their responses alerted me to the possibility that they all shared in a common understanding of what ICH involvement should mean, be and do. When asked from where they formulated their expectations, participants responded with popular texts such as films, television series, song lyrics, narratives and observations from former participants, older siblings, teachers and parents. “They’ve seen what previous Year 12s do and have looked forward to it” was a teacher’s response when asked from where students developed their expectations of ICH involvement. Older students were viewed as an influence, with one student reporting in interview, “I think it would have originally come from the Year 12s, like they thought up the idea and then put it into practice”. A teacher who had the task of organising the ball noted that outside friends also had an influence, citing, “They hear from their mates about what they do at other schools”.

Students also formulate expectations and ideas about what school rituals mean from their parents. One parent stated, “I think the tradition came from American TV” Parents were asked during interviews from where they believed school rituals originated. One parent responded, “I think that really it is a very, very American thing”. Another parent responded, “My first thought is that it is an American idea, came from an American influence, TV; kids see it and think it is a good idea”. A parent responded that for the older generation the school ball may have some origin in the debutante ball. The parent states she believes for the current generation, the ball is not connected to the notion of the debutante ball. The parent explained, “I think in the modern era, like my kid’s ages, it has come from American television with the proms and that kind of thing. Prior to that I think in my generation it was from the debutante ball, so basically you went to your debutante ball so that you were allowed to enter society”. Interestingly none of the interviewed students referred to the debutante ball as a possible original source. One student stated she

believed that the school ball originated in, “It would be like old olden days, parties and stuff, like in old ages and that”. A larger number of students identified that they believed the school ball was introduced due to American influence, “It’s just an American tradition we’ve all taken on” replied one student and “Just Americans deciding to celebrate the last year”.

Globalisation is often identified as “Americanisation” (Schake, 2009, 50). A number of textual resources on which participants based their expectations of school departure rituals were identified as American, although there are also a number of textual resources from Australia and other countries. Pavia also holds a similar view claiming that the influence of American media has had a bearing on students’ expectations:

Schools that once had a "leavers' disco" in the gymnasium - events characterised by intense social awkwardness - are now throwing ever more elaborate prom parties demanded by a generation who have grown up watching American high-school dramas (Pavia, *The Times*, June 21st, 2008, 4).

Another parent reported that older students are a positive influence, citing, “it gives the younger students something to aspire to”. One parent explained to me in interview that the ball offered an opportunity to bond with her daughter. The joy the parent expressed in being involved with her daughter’s preparation is an example of a globally understood event, such as the school ball, being applied to a personal level. The parent reported, “At a time in their lives when everything is often difficult, it is really nice to be able to share in their excitement of something nice that they want to do”. Parents were overwhelmingly positive, with all interviewed parents reporting that they viewed school rituals as important, or very important, events for their child to be involved in. It can be assumed the version of school departure rituals that students would hear from their parents would therefore be positive.

Teachers also have a role in the formation of the collective memory of school departure rituals. I witnessed a teacher informing the senior year assembly, “The ball is a special event in your lives. There are not many big events in life, but the ball is one of them. The ball is something you will remember for years to come, and it is something you will talk about when you meet up in years from now” (10th of April, Comet Bay College Assembly, 2013). The teacher’s statement promotes a collective

memory that positions involvement in school departure rituals as positive and important.

I acknowledge that the participants are active agents in their understanding of texts and that the degree to which they invest in the collective memory varies. The intention of the text is open to interpretation by the readers, and it is not possible to determine what meaning the reader will extract from the text. Barthes argues the reader determines his or her own meaning of a text, created from a collection of texts, experiences and beliefs:

... a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writing, none of them original, blend and clash (Barthes, 1977, 146).

Students have a choice as to what degree they will be willing participants in the active readership of texts. Wertsch identifies an inherent "irreducible tension" (2002, 117) between the agent (in this case the students) and the text (in this case the films, songs, television series and narratives). Wertsch describes the irreducible tension that exists between the agent and text, as the degree to which an individual believes completely, or rather selects sections they like and discards other sections that do not appeal (2002, 118). Wertsch warns that just knowing the textual resources does not determine how the participants will interpret the information (2002, 117).

Considering participants' interpretations of information and what meanings are derived through exposure to texts, de Certeau (1988) presents a similar argument to Wertsch:

Evidence collected cannot just be used to form statistical tabulations, but the repertory that 'users' carry out themselves. Thus, once the images broadcast by television and the time spent in front of the T.V set have been analysed it remains to be asked what the 'consumer' *makes of* the images and during these hours." What do they make of what they absorb, receive and pay for? What do they do with it? (de Certeau, 1988, 31).

Barthes (1977) reinforces the argument of de Certeau stating:

A text's unity lies not in its origin, but in its destination - the power of interpretation lies in the hands of the reader. It is not possible to predict the readers' interpretation of a text (Barthes, 1977, 147).

Although it is not possible to assess the intentions of all participants, Wertsch's advice must be considered when analysing the students' commitment to adhering to the popular texts they have available to them.

Collective Memory: How it *should* be?

School departure rituals are often depicted in teen film as being a positive experience, and the students expressed positive expectations during interview. One student stated, "This year is a really stressful one and having the ball kind of weights it a little". Another student stated she found the ball, "encouraging" and another student stated, "It is an incentive". The positioning of school departure rituals as positive experiences in teen film generates a collective memory template that ICH involvement will be fulfilling and satisfying for the participant. Hoffman explains the common expectation that one's ball must be perfect:

Prom Night. The most beautiful and special night in a teenager's life. This, just like one's wedding day, is where one spares no expense. The senior prom should be one of the most beautiful memories of high school. It is the big finale of 12 years of laughter and tears and is a night where magic can be made. It's because of this strong significance that everything must be perfect. In order to make that grand entrance, stylish clothes, the right hairdoo [sic], and an 18 ft. [foot] limo [limousine] are a must! (Hoffman, 2003, 32).

Images in the media are a source of the development of expectations of gender roles, self-evaluation and personal standards. Behm-Morawitz and Mastro argue:

Research examining the effects of media exposure demonstrates that media consumption has a measurable influence on people's perceptions of the real world, and, regardless of the accuracy of these perceptions, they are used to help guide subsequent attitudes, judgments, and actions (Behm-Morawitz & Mastro, 2008, 132).

The collective memory reinforced in teen film places the female in a position that relies heavily on her physical appearance. A promoted aspect of attending the school ball involves the locating of the perfect dress, and it is assumed it will be expensive. I interviewed 15 students and three cited they would not be attending the ball as it was too expensive. Both parents and teachers also expressed concerns about the expense of the ball making it inaccessible to some students.

Below is the case of one female student who chose to be interviewed regarding the ball, but did not attend the ball. The reason she cited for not attending was the cost involved.

Vignette One: Kiara volunteered to be included as an interviewed participant. Kiara is a 17 year old female student. She works part-time, but stated that the cost of attending the ball was too extreme, and she would rather spend her money “on other things”. She selected not to attend the school ball.

When interviewed as to why she did not attend, the student replied, “I was brought up to not do that kind of stuff”. She stated her, “family weren’t fancy, so staying home was normal”. A teacher offered to loan her a dress, which had been worn previously by her own daughter. The student declined. The reason she gave was that the ticket, transport and make-up were still too extravagant and beyond what she was prepared to pay. When interviewed after the ball had taken place, she was asked how she felt about not attending. She replied, “Actually, I didn’t want to go, I didn’t care, I was home chilling. I don’t have any regrets”.

The student may have declined the offer of a loaned dress due to embarrassment, yet she could have been dressed free of charge. If money was the main issue, she could have gone without make-up and as far as transport is concerned she could have found a lift, or had her parents drive her to the site. Considering these factors, it could be possible that it was not the cost involved, but rather that her expectations could not match the dominant narrative of what the night *should* have been, as represented in the collective memory. Collective memory does not need to be a faithful version of reality, but more importantly a social representation of what the collective memory *should* be (Marcel & Mucchielli, 2008, 144). Texts provide us with an idealised shared structure, meaning, communication and thought of what the collective memory *should* look and feel like (Marcel & Mucchielli, 2008, 144). Although the student believed she could not afford to go, was it more a case of she could not afford to go in the manner she expected, based on the dominant narrative template in images, films and television? A second interview was conducted after the ball had been held. The student said that she did not have any regrets. On further questioning as to why she had decided not to attend the student alluded to the possibility that her religion, Mormonism, did not place importance on extravagant events. The student

reported, “My family don’t do celebrating things”. She did not say explicitly that she chose not to attend due to her religion, but it may have been another factor in her decision to not attend.

As discussed previously, participants are active agents in their interpretation of texts (de Certeau, 1988, 31). The student may have resisted involvement, and attendance may not have appealed to her for a number of reasons. The key issue that arose in interview was the monetary cost involved. “Some people don’t have the privilege of buying what they want for it, so it has become a thing that people pay a lot of money for dresses and everything they need for it, and some people can’t”, explained one student. A teacher stated the cost is a concern saying, “They have become more elaborate - definitely”. Another teacher stated about the school ball, “It used to be a really cheap, low key event, sometimes ran in the school or local hall”. A parent reported, “We didn’t have a school ball; we just had a dinner which was at the school”. Another student expressed it simply as, “It cost too much”.

Nuttall and Tinson (2011) conducted a study on the reasons teens resist the consumption of the prom. The findings of the study centred on the perceptions of the non-attendees’ peers. The peers placed those who did not attend into 4 categories. The first group were those who could not afford to attend. Peers’ perception was that they were not to blame, and the non-attendee did not suffer any noticeable negative effects. The second group were identified by their peers as not attending to avert risk to their self-esteem or to avoid being in an uncomfortable position. The perception of their peers was sympathetic. The third group were those who passively disengaged in attending. The perception by their peers was that this group was not willing to make an effort, they were socially lazy, and their non-attendance was viewed as rejection. This was the most maligned group as their peers felt they were not only against attendance, but also against those students who chose to attend. The fourth group was the intentionally disengaged. They were viewed as making a statement by not going. They were not negatively viewed by their peers, as the reasons for not attending were largely connected to conforming, and many of the non-attendees had a history of non-conformity (Nuttall & Tinson, 2011, 1730-1731). Students who choose not to attend due to financial reasons, lose little credibility with their peers. The female student may have decided not to attend due to disinterest or a

number of possible reasons, yet offering the explanation of not being able to afford to attend would be viewed more favourably by her peers. Participants are active agents in their understanding of the collective memory paradigm presented to them and multiple readings of non-attendance exist.

The Media and Collective Memory

It is the consumption of common texts, particularly through the media, that concerns scholars regarding globalisation (Neiger *et al.*, 2011, 6). Popular media serves as a site from which the dominant collective memory can reach a wider audience (Neiger *et al.*, 2011, 6). Events now gain their public meaning, not through academic and state sponsored interpretation, but through mass media, such as television, films and press (Neiger *et al.*, 2011, 10). The media is the social connectivity that joins the viewer to the central idea, which aids in the development of collective memory (Frosh, 2011, 124). Elements of a society's culture can be made familiar through the "cultural template" presented through collective memory (Berkowitz, 2011, 209). New forms of technology, such as the expansion of digital media and social media sites, have enhanced the potential for the articulation of collective memory on an international scale (Weedon & Jordan, 2012, 145).

The widespread availability of film and television has made popular media a common source of transmission. The continuation of tradition has become more and more dependent on mediated forms of communication since technology has enabled mass communication (Thompson, 2011, 350). The widespread availability of cinema and television has made the media more effective than books in creating a popular memory (Foucault, 2011, 253). People make sense of events through "premeditated" experience delivered through the media (Erlil, 2008, 393). Erlil (2008) uses the extreme example of Americans making sense of the 9/11 attack through exposure to disaster movies, the crusader narrative and biblical stories. Viewing of films, and contact with other students, functions to prepare the students and provide a preconceived set of expectations of what school departure rituals will be. The role that media performs in transmitting dominant ideas should be considered.

Leimgruber argues:

Cultural transmission cannot be understood without taking into account the role of cinema, phonographs, radio, television, the Internet and other derived forms and variants, media that are not unilaterally passive, but to a great degree are active shapers of cultural practices (Leimgruber, 2010, 180).

Nora suggests that institutions now play a role in ensuring the continuity of memory (Nora, 1989, 7). The negative aspect of memory being regulated by institutions is that politics, power and agenda may influence the resulting image projected. I argue that the film industry and popular media in general can be included in what Nora refers to as “*Lieux de memoire*” (Nora, 1989, 11) as both the media and film industry have taken responsibility for the dissemination, vigilance and representation of the past. With the readily available access to digital media, it could be said that the film industry and the media are institutions to which a vast amount of people have daily contact. The influence of the media is considerable and the dominant discourse presented through the media informs the collective memory of the event (Edy, 2011, 42). Visual representations such as film and television are important to consider as they are “tangible public presentation and articulation of collective memory” (Vintitzky-Seroussi, 2011, 51).

Although commentators have expressed concern on media spreading the negative effects of globalisation, the case below demonstrates that intercultural connections through the media can enhance ICH. Students have embellished current school departure rituals with aspects of international ICH that appeals to them.

International Influence: The Case of ‘Promposal’

Common textual resources inform the collective memory (Wertsch, 2002; Halbwachs, 1992). Globalisation, although deemed a threat in UNESCO’s 2003 convention, can be the stimulus for new forms of collective memory. “Promposal” is an example of an international phenomenon which has enhanced the ICH expression of school balls. The term promposal describes the elaborate asking of a partner to accompany one to the school ball. Promposal examples are shared globally through the use of technology, social media and popular culture. Performances of promposals can be located from all around the world, for example, promposals from Singapore, Canada, America, Mexico and Hong Kong can be located on *Facebook* and *YouTube*. The sharing of promposals and the addition of this neo-tradition to the

recognised proceedings of an ICH expression is an example of globalisation working to enhance and ensure the continuance of ICH. The participants' application of digital social networking sites such as *Facebook* demonstrates that participants are able to adapt a global phenomenon to a personalised level.

The question PROM? has become the standard representation used during a promposal. The question has been used on banners flown by planes, written on balloons and applied in as many imaginative contexts as students can think of. The term became popular after the 1999 movie *10 Things I Hate about You* (Touchstone Pictures, 1999) when Heath Ledger's character Patrick organises the brass band to help him serenade his sweetheart, culminating in his asking her to attend the prom as his date. Promposals have featured in several films. In *High School Musical 3* (Walt Disney Pictures, 2008) the main male character, Troy, arranges to ask his date to attend with him from the roof of the school. His close friend, Chad is refused by his desired date for not asking correctly, until he performs an entire musical number in the school cafeteria. In *Prom* (Walt Disney Pictures, 2011) a shy student presents the letters P.R.O.M.? on stage during the rehearsal of a joint school production.

There are a number of *Facebook* pages on which people can post their own promposal attempts for others to see. Schools and colleges have created competition *Facebook* pages in which followers can post their promposals and win tickets to their school ball or prom. A number of *Facebook* promposal sites have over 1000 followers. A search on *YouTube* uncovers a vast amount of promposals. Elaborate examples include organised flash mobs, organised mass scavenger hunts, a student who spells out his date's name with 1,500 balloons, and even one student who involves the whole school in forming a guard of honour for his intended date to walk through. One potential date is asked when 1000 ping pong balls, each with the question PROM? written upon them, fall out of her locker.

Examples of promposals have even made it into the press. *The Globe* (August 24th, 2012) covered a story of an eager young potential suitor who created a scavenger hunt, with his intended date covering the campus, popping balloons at each location to release the next clue. The final location brought her to the cafeteria where her potential suitor serenaded her with a ukulele. *The Daily Mail* (19th April, 2012)

covered the story of two sweethearts, the boy presenting the girl with a ring in front of the class with the question PROM? In all cases that I have researched it is the boy who asks for the date. There may be cases where the gender roles are reversed, but it would appear that the traditional male doing the asking is favoured in the promposal. The international example of promposal demonstrates the capacity of positive enhancement of an ICH expression through intercultural exchange.

Belonging and Identity

Globalisation via the influence of the media and shared understandings delivered through the collective memory can aid in the alleviation of difference in what is now a diverse student population. The shared experience of ICH allows for the opportunity for members of a culture to form bonds. The 2003 UNESCO convention acknowledges that a shared experience has the capacity to bring people together:

Considering the invaluable role of the intangible cultural heritage as a factor in bringing human beings closer together and ensuring exchange and understanding among them (UNESCO, 2003, 2).

It is through the location of a shared memory that group identity is shaped (Jacobs, 2010, vxiii). The nature of collective memory demands that it is distributed amongst a group (Wertsch, 2002, 2009; Erll *et al.*, 2008; Olick *et al.*, 2011; Margalit, 2002). Individuals are able to relate to others they believe have the same shared experience. Wertsch attributes the desire to seek identity in the dominant collective memory paradigm as a human need to fulfil an understanding of who we are:

Instead, we are often committed to believing or not believing them, sometimes in a deeply emotional way having to do with fundamental issues of identity (Wertsch, 2002, 9).

Group involvement and others' reflection of ourselves aids in developing a clear sense of self:

It is well established that the concept of the "self" is formed as a reflection of the responses and evaluations of others and that awareness of the perceptions of others is an indicator of social competence (Nuttall & Tinson, 2011, 1728).

I found the same to be true during the interviews I conducted. Participants spoke of others and the involvement of others frequently. Students used “we, us or our” rather than “I” in their responses, and teachers and parents used “their and they”. It would appear school departure rituals offer a forum for the contact between people to occur, and participants were conscious that the proceedings were a group activity. A parent explained during interview, “The photo they wanted on their wall was the group one, not the formal photo, but the one of their big group of friends”.

The findings of this study were that the student participants identified a sense of belonging in a diverse environment due to sharing in the collective memory paradigm. The students reported that ICH involvement provided an arena in which they could find commonalities. “Once I got there it wasn’t really fazing me, because it wasn’t really a partner thing. It was more groups”, said a student, who revealed he would have liked to have attended the ball with a partner, but went alone, yet enjoyed the company of his fellow students. Students access school departure rituals as a method of finding unity and connection with peers. A student explained in interview that a motivation of conducting school rituals is so students are able to, “get to know your year group” and another student responded that the importance of graduation is, “It is the last thing we will do as a year group”.

The role school departure rituals play in supporting a degree of social parity is explored in television mockumentary comedy series *Summer Heights High* (ABC, 2007). The main female character Jam’ie explains that the opportunity for the students to share a common experience alleviates some of the social tension created by cultural-socio differences in the school environment:

Formals bring people together. They bring groups together and remove the apartheid of the playground. Emos, Christians, Asians, Skanks, Lesbians and Hot Girls all come together at the formal. It’s a social and cultural melting pot that goes off.” Emos can dance with the jocks. Christians sit with skanks. Asians share limos with lesbians. And my group talks to the fugly girls. That’s right. Formals bring people together (Jam’ie King in *Summer Heights High*, ABC, 2007).

ICH involvement provides opportunities to find commonalities in an evolving, multicultural environment. Students are very aware that the student population is a

diverse one. The work of Hoffman (2004) indicates that friendship groups and affiliations are marked cultural indicators on which students based diversity. The three most important elements of high school identified by students in Hoffman's studies were "getting along with others, being involved and being independent" (2003, 35). The friendship group is strengthened by the shared experience, as one teacher stated in interview, "The ball was a time they could be with their group and spend time with them".

It is due to the diversity of the student population that one interviewed teacher claimed that leavers' jackets were first introduced by teachers as a way of creating team cohesion. The teacher said the introduction of leavers' jackets were an example of, "social engineering on the part of the teachers". Interviewed students responded positively to the fact that leavers' jackets made them visually identifiable from the rest of the school. One student replied that wearing a leavers' jacket, "shows everybody who is boss", and another student responded, "Shows everyone that we are still hanging in there, we are still at school". A suggestion is that the appeal of the letterman jacket is that it is masculine, "It comes from a place of bravado" (Coleman, *The New York Times*, April 7th, 4). Teachers also identified that the leavers' jackets are a visible marker that the senior class was separated from the rest of the school population. One teacher explained, "Wearing the leavers' jackets is a bit of a privilege. It separates them from the lower school and it has their names on, they keep them and their name is part of that group" and "The leavers' jackets are a positive reward. It separates them from the rest of the school". It would seem the significance of leaver's jackets, and the importance of the mandatory date printed on the jacket, functions to identify him/her as a member of a recognised group. Once the student has left school, they are able to still wear their jacket, with one interviewee reporting, "They still wear them from four or five years ago. They had a really good time wearing those jackets and they had a really good time at school". This sentiment is in agreement with commentators who suggest that a shared experience grants the participants a sense of belonging. Once participants feel alignment with the group, the dedication to maintaining the group's identity is paramount (Whitehouse *et al.*, 2012, 441). Hoffman (2003) identifies the function of school rituals as having a levelling effect, as students become a homogenous group, allowing for the possibility of a sense of belonging to be achieved. ICH involvement allows the students the

opportunity to combine into an egalitarian group as, for example, ‘The class of 2015’.

When you do not Belong

School departure rituals may provide opportunity to bring people together and provide a sense of belonging in a diverse population of students; however, it must be acknowledged that not all students feel that they belong. A teacher stated that, “It is highly desirable that we have a number of functions that all of the students feel they can participate in”.

Students do not attend school departure rituals for a variety of reasons. The following vignette considers the position of a young gay male in the school ball scenario.

Vignette Two: Thomas volunteered to be interviewed. Thomas is a 17 year old homosexual male student. Thomas is open about his homosexuality, and he is comfortable about his homosexuality being known to the school population. He has a long-term partner who attends the same school, but in a lower grade. He decided to ask his same sex partner to accompany him to the ball as his partner. His same sex partner declined the offer to accompanying him to the ball, so Thomas arranged to attend the ball with a close female friend.

In the history of the school in which the interviews took place, there has never been a same sex couple attend the ball. I understand the issue has arisen on two separate occasions. On the first occasion, a student applied for his same sex partner to attend, as is required of all out-of-school partners, and permission was granted. The student and his partner then decided prior to the ball that they would not attend, as they felt the pressure and attention they may attract might ruin their night out.

The second occasion, involved the student who chose to be interviewed. The male student invited his younger male partner. The partner’s decision was not to attend the ball based on the points that, “He doesn’t like dancing, dressing up and that kind of stuff”. The student stated that he would have been comfortable in taking his partner if

he had wanted to attend. The student also stated that he regrets that he did not get the chance to take his partner, and would have preferred that his partner was with him on the night.

Due to the fact that his same sex partner did not want to attend, the student instead invited a close female friend. They planned their outfits together, and decided on the colour scheme of their outfits as a joint unit. The resulting couple that attended the ball conformed to the heterosexual norm. The student reported to me on the night that he would be glad when the ball was over at midnight, so that he could go and spend time with his partner.

One can imagine the strength of character that would be required of two homosexual individuals to be the first couple to attend the ball together. They would receive attention: whether that is negative or positive attention we can not be sure. The important aspect of this scenario though, is to consider the recognised expected schema of the school ball, as represented in the collective memory, is dominated by heterosexual couples.

Conclusion

UNESCO states in the preamble of the 2003 convention that it recognises that the process of globalisation presents a grave threat of “deterioration, disappearance and destruction” of ICH (UNESCO, 2003, 1). Other commentators have expressed concern regarding the effects of globalisation, and the blending of cultures resulting in one homogeneous global culture (Bortolotto, 2010; Labadi & Long, 2010; Leimgruber, 2010). The findings of this study were that the example of school rituals demonstrates that a shared experience can provide a sense of belonging in a world of difference. Participants developed a set of common expectations, meanings and understandings based on the “narrative template” offered by the collective memory of what school departure rituals *should* be (Wertsch, 2008, 140). According to Wertsch, collective memory is formed through the sharing of common textual resources. The collective memory is shared amongst the group as they have access to the same textual resources. The participants then personalise their understandings

and meanings of the collective memory. The participants apply their understandings to share with others in a common experience which has the capacity to grant them a sense of belonging in a diverse population.

The media can act to present a version of the collective memory (Behm-Morawitz & Mastro, 2012). Although they understood their involvement at a personalised level, participants revealed in interview that they had formed their expectations of ICH involvement through stories they had heard from a number of sources. Parents and previous students, the media, especially films, television series and songs were the identified sources. Participants reported that they believed that some school departure rituals exist due to the international influence of the media. In that regard, the introduction of international, globalised aspects of ICH located through the collective memory can enhance ICH.

The findings of the study were that the common set of understandings and expectations located through the collective memory of what school departure rituals mean, allows for a sense of common understandings and meanings to be shared. The student population is a diverse one, and to the degree students invest in the collective memory varies, but a sense of belonging can be granted through the shared experience of ICH (Hoffman, 2003; Whitehouse, 2012). Balanced with the positive gains of intercultural connections, the thesis acknowledges that the forces of globalisation has the potential to erode forms of ICH and there is a possibility that vulnerable forms of ICH are unlikely to survive without intervention. The next chapter will examine the threat to ICH of stagnation.

Chapter Six: Intangible Cultural Heritage and Stagnation

The last chapter considered the threat of globalisation to Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). Another threat to ICH represented in heritage literature is stagnation. The concern of scholars of ICH is that pressure for ICH expressions to remain authentic, the use of technology to record ICH and the pressure to conform, may result in ICH expressions stagnating (Lenzerini, 2011, 109; Blake, 2009, 66; Bortolotto, 2010, 98). ICH expression may stagnate due to communities feeling obliged to perform ICH in a prescribed way in order meet the external criteria formulated by UNESCO (Hodder, 2010, 867).

That ICH will stagnate due to official documentation and preservation processes are main concerns examined in this chapter. In order to be documented, ICH must be recorded. A required obligation of State Parties under the 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage* is to provide an inventory of ICH within their territory (Article 14, UNESCO, 2003, 6). Documentation of ICH may entail music being recorded, languages written down, dances filmed or performances photographed (Margolies, 2011, 29; Woonho, Hyun-Jo & Juwon, 2012, 115). The documenting of ICH has proved to be problematic, as it has both positive and negative outcomes.

Commentators for the negative aspects of ICH being recorded argue that ICH may become frozen in time (Foster, 2011; Lenzerini, 2011). The possibility that recording ICH practices freezes an ICH practice and denies it the opportunity to adapt and change has been debated by a number of experts (Leimgruber, 2010; Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009; Foster, 2011). Concern that recorded versions have the capacity to be held up as the authentic item has been expressed. Progressive performances must replicate it in order to be considered authentic (Tomioka, 2012). The ICH expression being influenced by recording is also a concern (Foster, 2011). Ownership of the recorded item can be in conflict with the ownership of the ICH expression, as photographs, tapes, manuscripts and other recorded items are often stored in museums and other archives separate from the participants (Hodder, 2010).

Commentators who support recording and documenting ICH have identified positive outcomes. Recording ICH into a retainable item prevents it from becoming “extinct” (Woonho, Hyun-Jo & Juwon 2012, 115). New technologies can be utilised in the recording of ICH. Of new forms of social networking phenomena, Pietrobruno argues:

The convention’s mandate to safeguard and disseminate worldwide awareness of intangible culture has taken shape through social media (Pietrobruno (a), 2013, 2).

The findings of the study were in conflict with the belief that stagnation is a threat to ICH. The study found that ICH can function as an opportunity for creativity and innovation. Participants reported that ICH could be accessed for personal innovation. The use of technology, and social networking sites provided creativity as well as offering a variety of different interpretations of ICH involvement. I will argue that the example of school departure rituals demonstrates ICH can be accessed to transform and innovate (Cominelli & Greffe, 2012, 256). UNESCO’s 2003 convention recognises the ability for ICH to provide creativity. In the preamble the convention states:

Recognizing that communities, in particular indigenous communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals, play an important role in the production, safeguarding, maintenance and re-creation of the intangible cultural heritage, thus helping to enrich cultural diversity and human creativity (UNESCO, 2003, 1).

The first section of this chapter examines the perceived threat to ICH of stagnation. This section will examine stagnation and UNESCO operating as an external judgement agency. The second section will consider the consequences of recording ICH. Commentators have expressed concern that recording ICH can result in ICH stagnating. The final section will consider the capacity of ICH to provide creativity and innovation. This section contains two sub-sections. The first sub-section focuses on the use of technology. Technology is also utilised to record ICH, but has been placed in the creativity and innovation section due to its capacity to provide alternative versions of ICH. The second sub-section will examine the participants’ opportunity to access ICH as a means of personal social innovation and creativity.

School departure rituals are utilised by participants to transform physically as well as transition of social statuses. School departure rituals, such as the graduation ceremony, function as an officially recognised transition that acknowledges the change from dependant student to young adult.

Stagnation

The possibility of ICH stagnating has been discussed by a number of experts (Kaufman, 2013; Foster, 2011; Lenzerini, 2011). One possible cause of stagnation argued by critics is due to the pressure on ICH to adhere to outside standards and judgements (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009, 1; Foster, 2011; Junko, 2011; Bortolotto, 2010). Official involvement in ICH can result in stagnation as the ICH practice is denied development (Lenzerini, 2011; Kaufman, 2013). The 2003 convention recognises that ICH is “constantly recreated” (Article 2:1, UNESCO, 2003, 2). Despite acknowledging that ICH can change and evolve, the inclusion on an official list can result in a practice having to remain unchanged. The pressure to ensure an expression of ICH authenticity is maintained can result in the practice stagnating (Lenzerini, 2011, 113). Admission to UNESCO’s list of ICH expressions to be safeguarded depends on the authenticity of the practice as deemed by an outside source (Leimgruber, 2010, 169). Legislation governing expressions of ICH are in state control rather than in the hands of the communities, or nations who own, or practice the ICH practice (Kearney, 2009, 210). Heritage politics could effectively cause ICH to stagnate by “conservation, preservation and ‘museumification’ of ICH practices” (Leimgruber, 2010, 169). ICH can be “preserved, conserved, lost or destroyed” when open to outside regulation (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 294).

Criticism of UNESCO and the 2003 convention centres on the strict judgments and criteria placed on communities having to prove their expressions of ICH are worthy of preservation (Leimgruber, 2010; Smith & Waterton, 2009; Blake, 2009). The pressure to conform to an outside agency may result in stagnation (Kaufman, 2013; Kurin, 2007; Boswell, 2008). Who decides what cultural forms are worthy of preserving and safeguarding is contentious as the values and beliefs of an external agency can appear oppressive and judgemental when applied to diverse expressions of ICH (Graham, 2009, 190). The practising community should not need to prove the value or significance of their ICH events outside the community (Blake, 2009, 46).

Blake questions “Is it necessary for ICH expressions to be valued and acknowledged outside their community?”(2008, 46). Despite UNESCO’s best intentions, performances and expressions of ICH are judged as worthy of safeguarding or not. An outside agency placing judgement on the worthiness of an ICH practice means they are held up “under the scrutiny of foreign eyes” (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009, 10).

Bortolotto even goes as far to consider UNESCO a force which imposes external values (2010, 98). Critics argue the values that are used to create the criteria for assessing the value of heritage are based on Western standards (Hodder, 2010, 862). It has been suggested that mechanisms of the heritage system are considered a “select club” of the West (Labadi, 2013, 130). The value laden inclusion on the official UNESCO list has also been debated that inclusion on the list can result in an “instinctive perception” that included practices are more valuable and exceptional than other unexceptional and therefore unlisted examples of ICH (Lenzerini, 2011, 110). By seeking out the “masterworks” of ICH, the ordinary and unremarkable are overlooked (Kaufman, 2013, 25).

The current official process of determining the value of ICH practices has a purist approach (Kaufman, 2013, 21). Applying a too critical judgemental approach and strict criteria, results in some valuable ICH expressions missing out. Kaufman applies the analogy of whiskey and vodka to practices of ICH:

High standards are an obstacle to good work. The exclusion of ICH practices because they do not meet standards should be relaxed. Like vodka, it is good to mix, yet keeps its original qualities, but UNESCO only wants undiluted whiskey (Kaufman, 2013, 21).

Kaufman’s comparison of ICH to alcoholic spirits is a fair analogy, as the vodka represents the key elements of a practice that have remained while the ICH practice has evolved over time. The undiluted whiskey represents the ‘purist’ approach that only expressions of ICH that can be judged as authentic are included.

Recording Intangible Cultural Heritage and Ownership

The recording of ICH into tangible and retainable items is another area in which experts are concerned that ICH may stagnate (Foster, 2011; Leimgruber, 2010; Lenzerini, 2011). Once an ICH expression has been recorded, whether that be via filming, writing or taping, the recorded item can suspend the ICH expression in a moment in time (Lenzerini, 2011). The ownership of the recorded item is another consideration (Hodder, 2010). The issues of maintaining authenticity, adhering to outside judgements, recording and ownership will be discussed in greater detail in the following sections.

The best method of recording, the use of technology, cultural ownership, and the consequences of recording expressions of ICH became the subject of debate amongst experts in the field. Writers on the subject (Foster, 2011; Leimgruber, 2010; Lenzerini, 2011) cited that some of the possible consequences of recording ICH is that it can become frozen, or standardised, corrupted by globalisation, or shrunk down to become more commercially digestible. The main issue that evolved around the safeguarding of ICH is that in order to retain the intangible, it must be recorded. The recording process can result in ICH losing its original meaning and vibrancy:

Cultural heritage which is inventoried, classified, declared an official treasure, and kept under surveillance by committees of governmental control is often destined to experience a loss of 'much of the spontaneous creativity that gave it meaning in the first place (Lenzerini, 2011, 119).

The transferring from the intangible to the tangible recording preserves the event, but it also traps it in a moment in time. The fear is that active, living ICH will stagnate once recorded. Recorded examples of ICH could suffer:

The conservation, preservation, and museumification (if not mummification) of intangible culture (Leimgruber, 2010, 169).

Another concern of recording ICH that has been brought to the forefront is the issue of official involvement by UNESCO encroaching on the organic nature and ownership of ICH. Owners of ICH may become trapped as once placed "into

categories” people may have trouble escaping (Hodder, 2010, 871). Heritage managers may insist that people perform their “prescribed heritage” for extended periods of time, produce traditional crafts and live in traditional housing (Hodder, 2010, 871).

Ownership of the recorded item is also a concern. Foster (2011) uses the example of a New Year’s Eve ritual performed on the island of Shimo-Koshikijima off the southwest coast of Japan to demonstrate the consequences of official involvement. The ICH expression involves a mythical creature named *Toshidon* appearing after dark to reward and reprimand children for their good or bad behaviour over the past year. In 2009 the *Toshidon* ritual was inscribed on UNSECO’s *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*. Foster reports on the ritual both prior and after it has been added to the list to highlight some of the concerns regarding the recording of ICH. Prior to the listing, the ritual took place in near darkness. The use of cameras was banned. Foster explains:

I was told that the flash of the camera would distract the participants. Aware of the cameras, the *Toshidon* might perform for the visitors rather than for the children, and the ritual would transform from "happening" into spectacle. Furthermore, if photographs were permitted, children would be able to see the *Toshidon* at any time of the year (Foster, 2011, 76).

Foster then revisits the island after the ritual has been added to the UNSECO listing. He describes the differences he observes in the manner that the villages approach the ritual. He reports that the local council had hired a professional film crew to record the event:

They were charged with documenting as much of the proceedings as possible, including the dressing of the *Toshidon*, their advance through the night from one house to another, and of course the ritual inside each household. The goal was to create a DVD record of the events on this particular day, the first performance of *Toshidon* after its UNESCO recognition. The resulting DVD would not be sold, but would be kept as a record (*kiroku*) in libraries and in the village office. There was clearly a sense that this year's *Toshidon* was a little different. Because of the filming, for instance, in Fumoto the lighting was significantly brighter than in the past (Foster, 2011, 79).

The concern of the villagers is expressed to Foster about the consequences of recording the ICH ritual:

Many people I spoke with expressed concern that UNESCO recognition will make the performance of *Toshidon* stagnant. They stress that such fossilization runs counter to *Toshidon's* own history and nature. It was always, they argue, an "informal" and "personal" procedure (Foster, 2011, 82-83).

Foster's argument that the impact of recording the *Toshidon* ceremony not only had a profound effect on the proceedings and the way in which the ritual was performed, but also how the traditional participants felt about it. In Foster's example, it is apparent that issues of ownership are present. The recording is organised and conducted by the official representatives of the community, the village office, rather than the participants themselves. In this case, the recording was conducted not to be sold or used commercially, but as an official record to be kept for the community. The resulting tapes were to be kept in the local library and village office (Foster, 2011, 79). Although the tapes were to be kept in the local community, the tapes themselves are not in the control of the individuals who performed *Toshidon*. The complications of recording are highlighted in this case, as the very reason for recording the ICH event was to safeguard it, yet in the process the ritual had to sacrifice its organic nature as identified by the villagers.

When recording of ICH is conducted for commercial purposes, such as tourist promotions, another threat is evident. Leimgruber (2011) shares the concern that by recording ICH the possibility of:

... isolated, immobilized, but pretty intangible cultural forms that will become popular tourist attractions (Leimgruber, 2011, 186).

Benjamin's argument regarding art works is that the replication of an object diminishes the object's aura. According to Benjamin, through process of mechanical reproduction, the feelings and emotions the creator of the piece would usually embed into the object are absent:

That which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art (Benjamin, 1992, 29).

Does the recording of such events as *Toshidon* lose authenticity in the replication? Benjamin claims that it is in the promise of the presence of the original that awards an object its authenticity (Benjamin, 1992, 29). The same concept can be applied to

the recording of ICH. The concerns that recording ICH has the capacity to turn living, organic events into stagnant imitations of the originals are a possibility. A copied traditional dance performed for paying tourists potentially loses its uniqueness and meaning. Although the example of *Toshidon* demonstrates that the pressure to record ICH resulted in compromise to authenticity, the example of neo-traditions and new forms of communications through social media sites show the possibility for new, vibrant applications of recordings. New understandings through various forms of technology allows for participants to transform and change ICH to fulfil multiple relevant requirements.

Intangible Cultural Heritage as Innovative and Creative

The concerns of commentators about the threat of stagnation of ICH are disputed by other writers who focus on the creative possibilities of ICH involvement (Cominelli & Greffe, 2012; Tomioka, 2012). ICH can offer creativity for artisans with the creative components offering opportunity for diversity (Cominelli & Greffe, 2012, 250). ICH is an outlet for creativity as artisans constantly adapt and adjust to “new issues, new needs and new perspectives” (Cominelli & Greffe, 2012, 247).

The UNESCO 2003 convention recognises the capacity for creativity in the preamble stating:

... the processes of globalization and social transformation alongside the conditions they create for renewed dialogue among communities (UNESCO, 2003, 1).

The 2003 convention also recognises the opportunity of creativity in the preamble stating:

... production, safeguarding, maintenance and recreation of the intangible cultural heritage, thus helping to enrich cultural diversity and human creativity (UNESCO, 2003, 1).

This highlights that rather than being in danger of becoming stagnant, ICH has the capacity to be vibrant and creative. ICH practices have the capacity to alter the ordinary patterns of relationships and interactions (Houseman, 2011, 76). The dynamic nature of ICH can be used to create new possibilities for participants as ritual involvement:

... seems to give men and women a venue where they can produce, maintain, repair, and transform their reality (Underwood *et al.*, 2011, 216).

The following two sections will examine two areas which demonstrate ICH's capacity for creativity and innovation. The first section will consider the use of technology to record and distribute ICH. The use of technology also creates an unofficial archive for examples of ICH. The second section will consider the personal creativity and innovation ICH involvement affords individual participants.

Technology

UNESCO has made use of technology to help in the task of safeguarding ICH. UNESCO has an interactive database to help State Parties meet their obligation of creating an inventory of ICH in their territory (Article 14, UNESCO, 2003, 7). UNESCO also utilises technology in the form of a video hosting site on UNESCO TV which globally transmits *YouTube* videos of officially recognised intangible heritage (Pietrobruno (b), 2013, 1260; Cabral, 2011, 37). New technologies can be deployed and accessed to open new audiences, uses and understandings of ICH (Cominelli & Greffe, 2012, 240). The boundaries of public and private domains, as well as formal and informal versions of heritage, are challenged through the use of the internet. Significant aspects of traditional culture have been reshaped, revived and circulated due to the use of unofficial social media (El-Aswad, 2014, 159).

Revival of traditional characters can occur through media. Yuan (2014) uses the example of a traditional Taiwanese folklore character, *Marshal Nezha*, who has been recreated into *Techno Nezha*. The original *Marshal Nezha* was the god of logistics, and worshipped by transport companies. The modern version of *Techno Nezha* rides a motorcycle and is accompanied by popular electronic dance music (Yuan, 2014, 29). The popularity of *Techno Nezha*, especially amongst younger people, has revived interest in various religious ceremonies in which the character features in parades (Yuan, 2014, 28). Although *Techno Nezha*'s appearance has altered, the folklore of his brave acts remains the same. *Techno Nezha* can be used as an example of the concept of ICH developing and revitalising an older tradition (Yuan, 2014, 28).

An innovation that promotes ICH to a new and wider audience designed by *Korean Cultural Heritage Administration* is *Ichpedia* (Park, 2014, 71). Positive outcomes to evolve from *Ichpedia* are that communities have greater access to viewing, sharing and including versions of ICH (Park, 2014, 72). *Ichpedia* allows for greater community input through surveys, allowing co-operation between communities and researchers (Park, 2014, 79). Park (2014) argues that *Ichpedia* serves to archive recorded ICH, while allowing access available to a larger audience. Another website focused on promoting ICH to a broader audience is *eNanda* (Marschall, 2014). The goal of *eNanda* is to provide available access to Zulu people living outside their homeland, as well as sharing Zulu culture, as it is a bilingual website (English and isiZulu). The site is interactive and encourages feedback with a comment feature through *Twitter* and *Facebook*, opening up input between interested parties (Marschall, 2014, 125). Online inventories allow for young people that have “assimilated to outside influences” to keep in touch with their culture in a convenient way (El-Aswad, 2014, 150).

UNESCO’s mandate to safeguard and circulate ICH can now occur through social media. *YouTube* is used officially by UNESCO as a means to preserve heritage, but user generated additions emerge as an unofficial archive. These additions could potentially challenge official safeguarding practices (Pietrobruno (b), 2013, 1260). The possibility of personal, informal additions to ICH archives via social networking sites is explained:

Whereas the UNESCO *YouTube* videos posted on the online representative list freeze intangible heritage (often in accordance with nationalist aims of current governments), the proliferation of user-generated *YouTube* videos of the very practices officially safeguarded potentially re-enacts heritage as it changes and takes on new shapes (Pietrobruno (a), 2013, 1).

Social media has the potential to present and safeguard multiple versions of ICH practices, not those only promoted officially by UNESCO (Pietrobruno (a), 2013, 15). New media can aid in developing ICH, as the addition of visual and audio forms can appeal to different markets. Leimgruber states:

The presence of new media does not simply lead to the loss of tradition, as is often claimed, but can also serve as a source of inspiration and revitalization (Leimgruber, 2010, 180).

Both *YouTube* and *Facebook* operate to archive memories, whilst at the same time sharing them with others. *YouTube* functions as a personal digital archive, which is able to be viewed in the public arena. With a population that has mass private ownership of technological devices, the capacity for the average person to record and store events is unprecedented.

Social websites such as *Facebook* are designed with the primary purpose of sharing personal information and images with others. Although the social websites are public, the images displayed are predominantly of a personal nature. Participants are able to select and chose the image they are contributing to the informal archive. The use of technology in the form of social networking sites, such as *Facebook*, are utilised by the students to broadcast selected images of their choosing, to reinforce their perception of ICH involvement in school departure rituals. The study of the archiving images via social networking is worth consideration to a greater degree than this chapter is able to dedicate to it in the required detail.

Transformation and Transition

The 2003 convention states "...social transformation..." can occur via ICH involvement (UNESCO, 2003, 1). The findings of this study identified that participants are able to access school departure rituals to enhance their own personal innovation. School departure rituals are accessed to enhance both social transformations and transitions (Driscoll, 2011; Hoffman, 2003).

The transformation from being a single person to part of a couple is a possibility embedded in some school rituals where singles have the opportunity to ask a partner for a date. One teacher observed in interview, "Males and females form relationships that last a bit longer because they see that as romanticised vision of being happily ever after". The virtues of transforming the physical appearance are embedded at an early age through the exposure to narratives regarding appearance.

In children's fairytales, physical appearance accurately predicts moral virtue and the allocation of rewards ... the morally righteous are physically flawless, and this combination

guarantees benefits in the form of material possessions, social status, and psychological well-being (Regan, 2011, 564).

The possibility of transforming their physical appearance appealed to participants. During interviews, students reported that they were motivated to be included in school rituals as it would allow them the opportunity for transformation. Students mentioned the physical transformation with comments such as, “We get to dress up and look real pretty” and “It is preparing us for our wedding day”. Another student said, “The ball is important because it’s part of growing up, and you get to dress up and just have fun”. One teacher stated in interview, “They have become more elaborate but the ball has always been a big occasion. For a lot of students it is the only time they ever get to go to a ball. To get dressed up and feel like princes and princesses and feel special”.

Another transformational function of school rituals involves the social mobility from student to young adult. A student contributed the comment that, “we’re becoming adults” as a reason to perform school departure rituals. School departure rituals function as a rite of passage for students in a secular environment. Hoffman defines a rite of passage as:

Rites of passage have several formal characteristics including repetition of format, occasion, or content; an element of acting in which the words and actions are not completely spontaneous; special behaviour that does not usually occur; order, including a discernible beginning, middle, and end; special staging that increases the attention of participants and onlookers, and a collective dimension that ensures that the rite has a special meaning for all in attendance (Hoffman, 2003, 24).

Hoffman differentiates between the individual “rite of passage”, and the group “rites of intensification” (2003, 25). Hoffman’s studies have identified that school rituals occur at crisis points, or at times when conditions change for the cohort. She also stresses that rituals have a propitiatory function of soothing conflict and promoting unity amongst students. Departure rituals such as the graduation ceremony and the school ball are examples of such events. A significant goal many students are working towards achieving through involvement in school departure rituals is the status change from adolescent to young adult (Hoffman, 2003, 24). For the modern

student, departure rituals offer an officially recognised method of movement between social statuses.

Adolescence is often viewed as a long period of transition in which established institutions are relied upon to provide guidance and discipline (Driscoll, 2011, 66). Schools now operate as the main institution responsible of preparing adolescents for general society. The students' final year of school is punctuated by a series of departure rituals that contribute to their transition from institutionalised student to independent adult. Students recognised that school departure rituals were a formal acknowledgement to signify their movement between life's stages. One student responded with, "It is the end of an era, say goodbye to your childhood". Another student remarked, "It is to signal a change from being at school to going to the adult world". Being recognised as an adult was also listed, "I think that it is important that they can dress and look really smart, grown up, and feel really grown up." Teachers shared the sentiment stating, "It is a transition in their lives, it is a milestone, it is a rite of passage to complete Year 12 and this is one way of acknowledging that as well". Transition was identified by a teacher who stated he understood the graduation ceremony to function as a rite of passage. The teacher explained, "It is the end of their journey through formal education together, and it is a bit of a rite of passage into adulthood I suppose".

Rituals occur at critical points of change within the group and function as a tool to help ease the transition (Hoffman, 2002, 28). When speaking of the ball, one proud mother explained the significance of involvement as, "You can see how far they have come since year eight and how they have matured, I mean, they are men now". The students themselves recognise the function of conducting school rituals is to officially mark the transition from one life stage to the next. Students responded that the graduation ceremony was held to, "celebrate that we are leaving school and becoming adults". During preparation, the students are able to practise adult behaviours, such as asking a desirable partner to accompany them to the event. A parent noted the opportunity to act in an adult manner. "He is excited. They have all been looking for dates". Another parent also identified the opportunity for the students to practise adult behaviour saying, "The ball teaches them to dance, how to behave themselves in a very posh environment, how to ask for a date". The challenge

of performing such tasks, aids in the transformation from dependant student to autonomous young adult.

Conclusion

The 2003 Convention proposed a way of safeguarding ICH was for State Parties to create an inventory of examples within their territory (Article 14, UNESCO, 2003, 7). Commentators were concerned that having to adhere to an outside agency such as UNESCO may result in stagnation (Labadi, 2012; Foster, 2011; Leimgruber, 2010; Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009; Kaufman, 2013). Commentators have expressed concern that recording ICH may result in stagnation (Lenzerini, 2011; Leimgruber, 2010; Foster, 2011). Recording ICH through filming, writing down, photographing, or audio recording transfers the intangible into the tangible. Ownership of the recorded items is another concern (Hodder, 2010; Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009; Howell, 2013; Leimgruber, 2010).

The findings of this study identified that rather than act as an agent of stagnation, recording and the use of technology can enhance ICH. As well as creating an official archive by State Parties, the use of technology by participants aids in the creation of an unofficial archive. Social networking sites such as *YouTube* and *Facebook* provide a widely accessible digital archive. Such social networking sites reach a diverse and international audience, so the opportunity for distribution of ICH and multiple interpretations exists. This allows for human creativity and as stated in the UNESCO 2003 convention "... social transformation, alongside the conditions they create for renewed dialogue among communities ..." (UNESCO, 2003, 1).

Social transformation as an aim of the 2003 convention (UNESCO, 2003, 1) can occur at a personal, individual level for the participants. School departure rituals provide an opportunity for transformation and transition. Participants can access school departure rituals to aid their own personal transformation for example; from a single person, to a couple, or from wall flower, to beauty. School departure rituals also function to officially acknowledge the transition in social status of the participants. The graduation ceremony functions to officially acknowledge the

transition from dependant student to young adult. The next chapter will examine transmission of ICH.

Chapter Seven: Transmission of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) is often represented in heritage scholarly literature as being passed down from the older generation, to the younger generation (Labadi, 2012; Leimgruber, 2010). ICH is positioned as being transmitted by the older generation initiating and overseeing the younger generation, eventually handing on the responsibility to them as they gain more experience (Foster, 2011, 86-87; Junko, 2011, 86). Commentators fear that ICH is in danger of disappearing if the younger generation refuses or does not have the opportunity to be in contact with the older generation (Junko, 2011, 87; Tomioka, 2012; Bozanic & Buljubasic, 2012; Margolies, 2011). The older generation is positioned as the “bearers” of ICH knowledge (Lenzerini, 2011, 102). The 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* positions ICH as generationally transmitted:

This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation ... (Article 2:1, UNESCO, 2003, 2).

As discussed in Chapter Three, the UNESCO document creates the impression that younger people are generally not interested in being a part of ICH. The preamble to the 2003 convention specifically identifies the younger generation as being in need of greater awareness:

Considering the need to build greater awareness, especially among the younger generations, of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage and of its safeguarding (UNESCO, 2003, 1).

The 2003 convention emphasises the need to target young people in regards to education of ICH. The convention directs the attention to the younger generation’s perceived deficiency in ICH awareness by stating:

... educational, awareness-raising and information programmes, aimed at the general public, in particular young people (Article 14, {a:i}, UNESCO, 2003, 6).

This chapter demonstrates that the findings of the study challenge the convention, which conceptualises ICH as passed down from the older generation to the younger generation. Despite the convention insisting that the younger generation is unaware and disconnected from the continuance of ICH, the findings of this study found the opposite to be true. The younger generation were in many cases the instigators of ICH events. A student stated that he believed that if the school did not organise ICH events, the students would take the initiative and create their own event: “It would be important to the year 12s, once they knew about the ball, but if there had never been a ball in the first place, they would just go out and celebrate themselves - yeah, leavers!”

The older participant groups of teachers and parents indicated that young people were the initiators of ICH. A parent responded that she believed the driving force behind the introduction of departure rituals may have been the students. The parent questioned, “Possibility it was the students’ idea, hey they do it in America, why not do it here?” A teacher responded to a question about recent additions to ICH with, “new traditions, the ones organised by the students, such as a stretch limo ...” indicating that he perceived neo-traditions to be under the control of the students. Rather than be positioned as experts and transmit their skills or knowledge, parents reported that they considered their role as support for their child. One parent said, “It is so nice to be involved in something they are excited about”. Another parent stated, “I think it is lovely that they make such a special fuss of these kids”. A parent looking forward to her daughter’s ball said, “There will be lots of shopping together” and another parent said, “I am just as excited for my boys as my girl”. A teacher who is also a parent said, “I personally found it exciting. I thought it was beautiful seeing them all dressed up, all the excitement, I thought it was great, I didn’t mind it at all”. Another parent spoke on behalf of other parents saying, “I guarantee that there are parents all over the world, who are so glad their children had to dress up for a formal, because they have got really lovely photos of them dressed nicely, and with the hair, and for the girls make-up and all the rest”. Such statements demonstrate that the parents were enthusiastically involved, but not in the role of transmitting knowledge.

Teachers also reported they were involved primarily to support the students, rather than acting as bearers of skills and knowledge. One teacher stated, “I don’t mind if

they don't really learn anything, they do enough of that already, I would just like them to have a good time". When asked if the school ball should continue, a teacher responded, "Yes, the students love it! They look forward to it. It gives them a chance to do something that is a bit of a fairy-tale. Many of them won't get to do a ball again, and if they do it won't be when they are in their youth. You are only 17 once, so why not!" Another teacher shared a similar view saying, "I think it is an important event. It's a big social event and probably for a lot of the students it will be the only time they ever get to go to a ball. It's their one big occasion". A teacher identifies that the students are the focus with the statement, "It gives recognition to the students that they have achieved something and that achievement should be celebrated".

The findings of the study were that the younger generation considers some aspects of ICH to belong to them, and in some instances, to be under their control. The perceived ownership expressed by the students indicates they feel they are in control of some ICH expressions and are not reliant on the guidance of the older generation. The study found that young people manoeuvre in the complex power structure of the school environment to ensure that they can make ICH expressions their own. The belief that the ICH expressions are their own indicates that the young people do not feel they need the involvement or guidance of the older generation.

This chapter is separated into three sections. The first section will detail the introduction of neo-traditions. Heritage literature positions ICH as transmitted generationally, from the elder generation to the younger generation. The introduction of a number of neo-traditions indicates that young people are the initiators, rather than the passive receivers of ICH instruction. The second section will detail the participants' belief that certain aspects of ICH expressions are under control of certain participant groups. The students' belief that certain aspects of ICH belong to them, or are under their control, indicates that young people do not depend on the older generation for instruction, but rather access ICH as a means of establishing some power through ownership. The third section will examine transgressions through recognised ICH school departure rituals. This section will determine whether the act of transgressing is an attempt by the younger generation to exert their independence from the older generation.

Neo-Traditions

A dominant version of ICH presented in scholarship literature is that ICH is passed down from the older generation to the younger generation (Article 2:1, UNESCO, 2003, 2; Smith & Waterton, 2009, 290; Florido-Corral, 2013, 58). The concept of heritage is perceived as having been something that “carries a legacy of values and cultural assets that have been handed down the generations unchanged” (Florido-Corral, 2013, 58). Boswell states that UNESCO describes heritage as “What we pass on to future generations” (2008, 11). ICH is represented as relying on traditional knowledge passed from “one generation to the next for hundreds of years” (Bozanic & Buljubasic, 2012, 18). The AHD represents ICH as being built on a sense of continuity and must be protected “for the ultimate benefit of future generations” (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 290).

The findings of this study were not consistent with the bulk of heritage literature on the method of transmission of ICH. The study found that the younger generation initiated the addition of neo-traditions to existing ICH expressions. The recent introduction of a number of neo-traditions to the example of school departure rituals is notable as it indicates that young people do not rely on previous generations to instil or instruct on ICH practices, but rather select aspects of ICH practices that appeal to them. The students are active in the selection and addition of neo-traditions. The introduction of neo-traditions indicates that young people are interested in the continuance, maintenance and enhancement of ICH.

A teacher who had left school eight years previously noted the difference in the ball she was organising to her own ball experience, “Compared to my school ball, it’s very different. My own school ball, it wasn’t even called a ball, it was a graduation dinner and our parents attended. No-one got limos because you just came with your mum and dad. It was at the local bowling club”. Another teacher tried to pinpoint when he had noticed the neo-tradition of leavers’ jackets being introduced. He said, “I left school in 1992, and we didn’t have them, and when I started teaching in Australia again ten years later it had slipped in, so I’m not sure when it came in, but for me it was somewhere between those ten years”. A teacher with 40 years’ teaching

experience informed me of her observation of alterations in the proceedings of school rituals, “The ball started to change about 12 years ago”. A teacher noticed the evolution of a grander style of dress for the females, “A new tradition is the long gown, the bigger the better, the more elaborate. It is a bit of a competition over who can have the nicest dress”. An interviewed teacher noted a neo-tradition was, “A seat in the pink stretch *Hummer*”. Another teacher responded she had noticed, “A limo to and from the event is a relatively new addition in government schools”.

A teacher of extended experience reported, “I noticed the leavers’ jackets coming in about 15 years ago”. During the last 15 years the ball has been moved from the end of the year to earlier in the year. Current practice is that the school ball is usually celebrated in March or April. One teacher explained in interview why she felt this neo-tradition should be dismissed. “I think the practice of the school ball should continue but it should move back to the end of the year. It got moved to the beginning of the year because some Year 12s only stayed to go to the ball and people doing ATAR scores, when it comes to everything they’re distracted about the dress, but I think it is not celebrating the finishing of schooling”. Another teacher stated a similar opinion, “Now it’s not celebrating the end of the year, it’s in term one, it’s not really for the same reason. It should be after exams.” A teacher also identified that the neo-tradition of the after party has changed recently. The teacher said, “They tend to be more private affairs, they hire hotel rooms now. They used to be more mass events”. The older generations of parents and teachers were asked during interview to reflect on their own departure ritual experience, for two reasons: firstly to identify the differences that have occurred in the course of one generation, and secondly, to identify when neo-traditions became part of the proceedings.

The origin of some neo-traditions is unclear, but other neo-traditions are identified as being influenced by exposure to American media. When asked in interview a parent responded, “More Americanised, I love dressing up. It only seems to have happened in the last ten years”. Another parent said, “My first idea was that it is American. Possibly it was the students’ idea since they saw it on T.V?” Avenues worthy of further analysis and exploration that are beyond the scope of this study are; to what degree the students adjust neo-traditions and how do neo-traditions adopted into

common usage in Western Australia schools compare to traditions interrogated in schools in other Western societies?

Other commentators identify that some neo-traditions have a historical connection with Australian traditions. Muck up day may have its origins in the colonial Australian tradition of farm hands celebrating the end of the season with excessive drinking (Griffen, 2001, 15). This is an example of carnivalesque that will be discussed in detail later in this chapter. The introduction of schoolies week is believed to have been started on the Gold Coast by graduates of a private single sex school in 1979 (Howat *et al.*, 2013, 161). According to Griffen, leavers' week and muck up day remain essentially Australian folkloric rituals that remain informal, unsupervised and primarily personal processes (2001, 11-15).

Some students said in the interviews that neo-traditions may be influenced by film. A student responded light-heartedly with, "Prom Night! Even though that is about some crazy psychotic teacher that comes back to kill a student, but apart from the horror you get the idea that it is kind of fun". One student reported that a graduation scene is often a common finale in films, "You see it at the end of a lot of movies". Another student informed me, "There are lots of teen movies that have some kind of ball or prom". Harper (2008) and Neiger *et al.* (2011) suggest that the media exposes students to a variety of different interpretations of ICH that they can select and adapt to suit their needs. As discussed in Chapter Five, knowing the textual resources does not determine the participants' interpretations (Wertsch, 2002, 117). Although some neo-traditions are influenced by media, it is not a simple case of the students repeating what they have seen on television or film. The example of recently introduced neo-traditions into school departure rituals in Western Australian schools is not an indication of predominantly American hegemony, but rather demonstrates the student's autonomy in adapting the meaning and purposes of neo-traditions to suit their needs.

The emergence of neo-traditions indicates that they meet the needs of a group. One possible explanation for the introduction of neo-traditions is an attempt by the students to gain control or power (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1984; Kong, 2007; Park, 2011; Rubin, 2009). Altering a recognised tradition is an organised method of

gaining control of the procedure. Husken describes the deliberate sabotage of rituals as a means of power play:

Thus in many cases, deviations from a prescribed ritual procedure do not occur incidentally or just by chance, but are employed intentionally. The performers and participants use these deviations in the ritual procedures as an important means to challenge prevailing power relations (Husken, 2007, 274).

I argue that the students have adapted some American traditions to meet their needs of autonomy and independence. Neo-traditions may be a consequence of the participants not locating a fitting tradition from their own culture. Rituals are used, manipulated and changed to suit the resistant needs of the participants, when other alternatives are not available (McAllister, 1991, 130). Delaney refers to as “peer initiations” performed by students in isolation from adults that function as their own recognisable rites of passage. Grimes argues young people will find ways to satisfy a sense of initiation:

If wise elders don't initiate adolescences, won't adolescences initiate themselves? (Grimes, 2002, 2).

The resulting peer initiations ceremonies often include imitations of adult behaviour such as drinking alcohol, smoking or sexual activity (Delaney, 1995, 894). A possible explanation for the introduction of American traditions is the belief in the individual, and the compatibility of American traditions with the empowerment of the individual (Schake, 2009, 51). One such neo-tradition to emerge which operates to increase the students' autonomy, independence and power is the hiring of a limousine. The limousine, and the act of driving, belongs in the sphere of adult behaviour. Many students in their final year of school are not old enough, or have the resources to drive themselves to the ball, so the limousine serves to mimic the inclusion of an adult activity. It deviates from the alternative of having a parent drop off and pick up after the ball, which places the parent in control. The freedom of arriving and leaving according to the students' will, places the student in a greater position of power.

Another recently introduced neo-tradition that could serve to increase the students' autonomy and independence is the after party. This occurs at the completion of the ball. Students leave the ball to attend a privately organised party. Students have claimed ownership of the neo-tradition by naming the event 'afters'. Only students are in attendance. Once at an after party they take off their formal wear and change into casual clothes. Drinking alcohol to excess and staying awake all night to watch the sun come up are often included. During the ball, teachers have a larger amount of control over the proceedings, although the students still exercise a degree of agency, yet the students ensure that they have full control of the after party by removing it from the jurisdiction of the school.

Students have also adapted existing traditions to meet their needs. An example of a neo-tradition that has been adapted by the students to meet their needs is the leaver's jackets. Teachers in their late-twenties who had left school themselves eight to ten years ago had no recollection of having had their own leaver's jackets, indicating that the tradition has emerged as common practice only within the last decade. When interviewed, students identified that they believed that the leaver's jackets were an American tradition. "From the American jackets I think?" a teacher questioned in interview. Another teacher with 40 years' experience remarked that she has observed a long process of items of clothing being used, eventually arriving at a jacket. The teacher stated, "Some people seem to think that it is an American tradition, sort of having something like that, but when I started they had t-shirts; the one we had said, "Out of here". Then one-up-man ship, they went to the next level, with rugby tops, then, that's how I saw it, one-up-man ship, try to beat the last school and be better".

The leavers' jackets can only be worn by students in their final year, visually separating them from the rest of the school and identifying them as separate and elite. Although the idea may have been influenced by the letterman jacket, the purpose that leavers' jackets serve is quite different. Unlike the letterman jacket, an essential element of leavers' jackets is that they have the date and list of names of the entire cohort printed on them. The purpose of leavers' jackets is to serve as a material memory, intended to be kept as a mnemonic item.

Another explanation for the increase in neo-traditions over the period of the last decade may be in reaction to a diverse student population. The introduction of neo-traditions has been identified as a tool that is used to unify diverse groups. Neo-traditions are utilised to solidify a belief that the group has shared a common past (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983; Kong, 2007; Park, 2011; Rubin, 2009). The recent invention of neo-traditions has helped construct the idea of nationhood in countries containing many ethnic groups (Kong, 2007). The introduction of neo-traditions functions to build a sense of camaraderie and create a sense of common interest amongst a diverse group (Kong, 2007, 79). Using neo-traditions to deliver a sense of a common past is especially useful when the shared history, background and commonalities are lacking or short. Although the link with the past validates neo-traditions, the repetition, organised and formalised procedure of recognised ICH events helps build cohesion amongst a group. Heritage is treated as something that is “repeated again and again” (Florido-Corral, 2013, 59). Neo-traditions become valid through “repetition” (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983, 5). Park (2011) argues that shared practices, such as expressions of ICH that are repeated, act as a cohesive force. Neo-traditions, whether they are invented, acquired or embellished, aid in maintaining common sentiments and identities, and give cohesion to an otherwise diverse group (Park, 2011, 522). This could help explain the increase in neo-traditions into school departure rituals. ICH can provide commonality and create a cohesive experience for all students of diverse backgrounds.

Another explanation for the increase in neo-traditions may be the social changes that have occurred in Western Australian society over the past decade. Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) identify that neo-traditions tend to manifest when society alters in some way. The possibility that students have access to a larger sum of money to spend on their school departure rituals may be another explanation for the introduction of recent neo-traditions. The school in which the study was conducted has a high population of students whose parents are employed in technical and trade industries (*Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census, 2011*). Pini *et al.* (2012) identifies that society in Western Australia is currently in a unique position. The former middle class no longer has the earning capacity, as the inclusion of many tradespeople who, in many cases, have greater economic capital than traditional middle class careers. Many students now have access to a larger budget, allowing them to afford more

luxuries than students in the past. One teacher offered the explanation, “It has been affected by a sense of materialism. They try to outdo each other”. Another teacher also noticed the amount of money contributed towards departure rituals, “The gowns are too elaborate, I think they are starting to pull back a little, people are realising how much money is being wasted, and money is being wasted. The girls don’t need \$800 dresses”.

One reason for increased incomes in technical and trade industries is the growth of FIFO (Fly In/Fly Out) positions. Four students include in the study had parents who were employed in a working and living situation away from the home. Three students also had a parent in the Australian Navy who may be required to be absent from the home for extended periods of time. The financial attraction of working away was given as a reason to accept employment away from the home. “Pursuit of a high income is the most commonly cited reason for joining the FIFO workforce” (Rainnie *et al.*, 2014, 94). An emphasis on financial reward by their parents could encourage students to value materiality. Another possible explanation of the focus on materiality is that parents working away from home may compensate for their absence by contributing a larger amount of money to their children. Parents working away from home may earn a larger wage, and therefore have access to greater amounts to be spent on their children. A study on Western Australian FIFO workers has shown that money may be used by parents in an attempt to counterbalance difficult family pressures. Kaczmarek and Sibbel argue “family income can act as buffers to protect the child” (2008, 298).

At the completion of 2012, I was present to witness the arrival of a neo-tradition, which demonstrated the manoeuvring of power relations. The neo-tradition that I refer to occurred at the study school in December, 2012. The deputy principal, concerned about the outcome of muck up day, suggested at the Year 12 assembly that the students all dress up as superheroes for muck up day. The students responded well to the suggested idea, and the majority of students complied, attending the last day of school in dress up costume. Under the direction of the deputy principal, the students all congregated on the oval for a year group photograph. At the graduation ceremony later the same month, the deputy principal congratulated the students on being the first year group to have dressed up as superheroes. He informed them that

the photograph had been taken would be the first to be hung in the library, beginning a neo-tradition that would continue. The students seemed pleased with this arrangement, not realising that they had been outmanoeuvred. One possible reason the idea may have appealed to the students may be the current popularity of superheroes movies. Although the students exercised control in the outfits they chose to wear, and were free from the confinement of uniform, the planning and organising of the event appeared to have been relinquished to school authorities.

The idea of dress-up day would not have been successful if it had not appealed to the students, and served a purpose for them in some way. The students located something in the idea of dress-up day that served to their benefit. The multiple readings available are dependent upon the perspective and interpretation of the participant. The tradition of dress up day, rather than muck up day, was also followed by the leaving cohort the following years of 2013 and 2014. They also had their photograph taken on the oval and hung in the library, continuing the neo-tradition of the school. I noticed at the completion of the following year, 2013, the leaving cohort had abandoned the title 'muck up day' and referred to the last day of school as 'dress up day', cementing the neo-tradition as part of the recognised ICH of the school.

Carnavalesque

Bakhtin (1984) considers medieval ICH events such as 'The Feast of Fools', when the usual social order was inverted and peasants became gentry and the aristocracy became the poor for the duration of the festival. Ordinary rules and regulations are suspended with a resulting mood of temporary liberation from the social order. The participants enter a temporary world where the normal rules are postponed. The usual hierarchies are inverted, allowing for a sense of equality to be experienced by the group. Bakhtin describes the conditions suited for the carnivalesque to occur:

This temporary suspension, both ideal and real, of hierarchical rank created during carnival time a special type of communication impossible in everyday life (Bakhtin, 1984, 10).

Some school departure rituals contain elements of the carnivalesque. The after party can be understood in the context of the carnivalesque. The transformation from beautiful ball-goer is reversed and turned on its head as students change back into their casual clothes and proceed to follow the neo tradition of becoming drunk, messy and unruly.

There was a place for humour and mockery during the medieval ritual of ‘The Feast of Fools’ and comic protocol was often part of the act. The election of a peasant couple to become king and queen is reminiscent of our current tradition of electing a belle and beau of the ball (Bakhtin, 1984, 5). The jester or jokester was an important feature of the carnivalesque scene, and might have functioned to relieve the pressure of any social tension, and appease aggression felt by those oppressed in the usual order of society (Santino, 2011, 65). The rise of the carnivalesque in modern times is accredited to the rise of global capitalism, with the focus more precisely on the desire of the individual (Bernier-Cast, 2011, 35). The celebration of the irrational, vulgar, grotesque, inane and sexual is an expression that centres on status and self-seeking fulfilment (Bernier-Cast, 2011, 23). At carnival time the emphasis is placed on excess and bodily enjoyment, rather than the mind. The physical aspect of the body is celebrated. The body is celebrated, yet the juxtaposed functions of the body are recognised. The mouth enjoys the consumption of food, alcohol and kissing, yet has the grotesque capacity to vomit and swear (Bakhtin, 1984, 27). The sexual organs are emphasised for their pleasure in sex, yet also for the element of the unwanted such as sexual disease, faeces and urine (Bakhtin, 1984, 20).

Muck up day is a neo-tradition that can be understood in the context of the carnivalesque, as the students attempt to take control of the school and transgress against the rules they followed while a student. The power hierarchy is tipped on its head, with students taking control. The photograph below of myself and my colleague dressed as students during muck up day demonstrates aspects of the carnivalesque. In the spirit of the ‘Feast of Fools’, the notion that the usual power hierarchy in society is turned on its head, I arranged with my colleague to come dressed as students (Bakhtin, 1984, 5).



The author, Theresa Jennings and colleague, Matthew Potts, dressed as students on muck up day (Comet Bay College, Secret Harbour, Western Australia, 2013).

Wearing the school uniforms demonstrated our willingness to take a subservient role and partake in the humour of the ritual. The photograph above displays the jovial mood and light-hearted intention of dressing as students. It is only within the perimeters of the muck up day ritual that teachers dressed as students could be considered appropriate. Having teachers present in school uniform created a festive mood and symbolised a break from the usual routine. Neo-traditions only become significant for ritual practice when it is not part of ordinary life (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983, 4). The enjoyment for the students was based on seeing us, their teachers, appearing dressed as they normally would, on a day they were able to wear free dress. My colleague and I, as teachers usually in a position of authority, were

willing to allow the power hierarchy to be altered only for the duration of muck up day. The usual hierarchy resumes once the school departure ritual is over (Kemper, 2011, 120).

Muck up day as a neo-tradition is an attempt by the students to exert power, yet the findings of the study confirmed that the students were hesitant to take complete control due to fear of the institution against which they were rebelling. One student explained his unwillingness to be involved in muck up day due to school imposed consequences, “If you do muck up day you will get suspended, and I don’t really want to take the risk”. Another student added, “They don’t want us to go too far and destroy property and stuff”. As discussed further in this chapter, the act of transgressing reinforces the recognised power structure of the school environment, with some students being unwilling to partake in muck up day due to fear of reprisals by the school.

Ownership of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Participants said in interview that they viewed certain ICH practices as belonging to, or being under the ownership of certain participant groups. The best thing about leavers’ week according to one student was, “The ability to have freedom; it is not a school-controlled event. You go on your own and enjoy” and “It gives you like, freedom, it just sinks it in that it is all over”. Another student stated of leavers’ week, “You are not tied down by parents or teachers”. The perceived ownership expressed by the participants indicates they feel they are guiding the direction of ICH. The students expressed they felt that the three departure rituals they strongly identified as their own were: the after party, leavers’ week and muck up day.

The 2003 convention has been identified of being used to legitimise that ICH practices are “ancient” (Leimgruber, 2010, 173). The version of heritage promoted in the AHD positions ICH as handed down from generation to generation functions to reinforce an elitist access to ICH:

The idea of inheritance, whereby current generations are conceived of as ‘stewards’ or ‘caretakers’ of the past, is important, as it works to specifically disengage certain social actors (that is, non-experts) from an active use of heritage (Smith & Waterton, 2009, 291).

The claim to ownership may indicate participants’ attempts to feel they have access to some power. Parents identified the graduation ceremony as the departure rituals that they felt involved their membership group the most. A parent remarked during interview, “Graduation was held in school grounds and it was a lot more formal. There were more parents at graduation. At the school where my children go, parents were invited to the school ball, but we declined because we thought it was an event for her rather than us”. Other parents reiterated this sentiment in statements during interviews of, “The mood at graduation is very different than the mood at the ball” and “The ball is more for the students, whereas the graduation is really for the parents”.

Schools provide an opportunity for students to come together through ICH events, however, school departure rituals are structured, controlled events. The power relations between the organisers and the participants can be volatile. Some school departure rituals are compulsory and students can be reluctant participants. Chappell *et al.* (2011) questions the agency available to participants. Students can exercise covert non-compliance, such as wearing their hat during assembly, dyeing their hair against school rules or subtle individualisation of their uniform (Nuttall & Tinson, 2011).

Schools are a site of hierarchical power relations which are deliberately applied without concealment. The Principal and school administration transparently survey and control teaching staff, who in turn enforce school rules upon the student population. An example taken from an interviewed teacher regarding the selection of leavers’ jackets illustrates the restricted agency of the students. In the choosing of leavers’ jackets, students are included in the selection process; however, their input and control is limited to what will be granted by the organising teacher. The teacher explains, “Most schools these days include the students in the process of choosing the particular ones they have, giving them at least a sense that they are being consulted. Whether that is true or not, in many cases it is Hobson’s choice. You can

have this one, or almost nothing else, because that one is too expensive or has pink or something”. The teacher also explained that he believed the introduction of leavers’ jackets were a result of social engineering on the teachers’ part. He offered the explanation as to the introduction of the leavers’ jackets as, “I think it was something that was an aspect of social engineering from the teachers in a sense of trying to create a sense of cohesion amongst the students, and try to encourage them to feel that uniform was a good thing, but I think that it initially was something that was engineered as an element of social control and to try to make them feel part of a group and go along with some of the social norms that the teachers in particular would like to see them adopt”.

The established hierarchy of teachers above students was apparent in both teacher and student responses. One teacher reported, “The students should appreciate what is done for them and to realise that they have to put in to get the best out of it”. A teacher also noted the amount of time and energy teachers expended in the logistics of the ball with the statement, “Now teachers spend so much time organising that ball”. Students responded in a way that inferred that they understood the conventional dominant power relations of the school environment. The ball is understood by a teacher to be under control of the school, and conducted for the benefit of students in the comment, “I think schools put on balls as it is an outlet for the students. It is a way of them celebrating their final year”. Although students referred to the ball as “my ball”, they often relied on parents to help financially. The fact that the students were still living at home also means that they had to negotiate arrangements with parents. One parent said in interview that, “it was lovely to look back at that time of their lives when they were growing up, but still under your control”.

The following vignette case study is included to gain a student’s perspective of school control of school departure rituals.

Vignette Three: Kyla is a 16 year old female student. She volunteered to be interviewed due to her particular circumstances surrounding the ball. All students must have their ‘good standing’ in order to attend the ball. As a result of Kyla not attending school for 4 days without parental consent or reasonable cause, Kyla lost

her good standing. Despite the fact that she had already purchased her dress and ticket for the ball, she was not granted permission to attend.

The student was interviewed several months after the ball had occurred. The student's response to not being allowed to attend was that she regretted the physical aspect of the ball. She felt her biggest regret was that she, "missed out dressing up and looking pretty". She reported that she would use leavers' week as her farewell to school life. She stated that she would prefer to attend leavers' week instead of the ball as it was, "organised by the students and not controlled by the teachers". The student regained and fortified her sense of agency and power by selecting to concentrate on an event she viewed as being within her control, rather than the event from which she was excluded by an external authority.

When considering ownership of ICH, it is interesting to consider the evolution of leavers' week over the past decade. Leavers' week has replaced the ball as the major end-of-year event. One interviewed teacher explained, "I think they need to have the celebration part of it, but because it is in first term (the ball) it isn't a celebration of completing your schooling. Students think of that now as leavers', outside of school, not actually the school ball, so I don't think it is for the same reasons anymore". Leavers' week has slowly altered from an overnight or weekend away with school friends to a highly organised week that involves both private companies such as *St John Ambulance* and government agencies such as *The Western Australian Police Force*. There is even an official website which school leavers can use to book accommodation and to obtain a wristband which entitles them to free access to buses that take them to designated areas for organised parties. *Red Frogs* is a volunteer organisation that assists and offers support with counselling to students while they are on leavers' week. Large networks of people are involved to support leavers' week. Although the students are actively seeking to have ownership of the departure ritual of leavers' week, they have the aid of others in doing so. This is not to say that all the students are pleased to have others involved, especially adults in authority. People under the age of 18 are not legally allowed to consume alcohol, so acts of resistance such as students covertly smuggling in alcohol do occur. In the confines of leavers' week, some consumption of alcohol will be tolerated. Once students perform illegal street drinking or endanger themselves or others, the authorities will apply the

usual penalties. Similar to the example used by O'Neil (2009) which will be discussed in greater detail in the section on transgressions, of slaves covertly gaining some autonomy through wedding rituals, the students interpret leavers' week rituals to suit their own need for autonomy. Leavers' week is always conducted away from the participants' homes, and without constant supervision from adults. The involvement of outside agencies such as *The Western Australian Police Force*, *Red Frogs* and *St John Ambulance* can be utilised by the students at their convenience and to the degree they chose within reasonable circumstances.

Although there may be displays of power, the co-dependent relationship between all participants groups is demonstrated by the commitment to continue ICH expressions. For ICH to thrive in a society is evidence of interest to maintain and observe ICH practices. Without active and deliberate transmission, ICH expressions would not continue to exist:

It is only through enactment by cultural practitioners that ICH has any current existence and by their active transmission that it can have any future existence (Kearney, 2009, 65).

In order for ICH to be safeguarded, the younger generation must be interested in transmitting practices (Labadi, 2013, 139). In order for ICH to thrive, participants must place value on the practice and be committed to its continued observance. School departure rituals are thriving, providing evidence that the younger generation must value ICH.

Transgression

Transgressions are the students' attempt to display their irreverence to the institution they have been part of for the past 12 years of their lives. In their departure from school, they publicly rebel against the rules and symbols of school, such as uniform. Leaver's week, muck up day and the after party are the most celebrated, and student centred transgressions. These three events are mainly student organised, and the students believe them to be predominately under their control. One student said of leavers' week, "You can drink, if you want. You can do drugs, if you want. You are not tied down by parents or teachers and it doesn't affect your grades". Despite the belief that muck up day and leavers' week were under their control, a number of

students expressed hesitance in involvement. One student reported, “I didn’t think we were allowed to do muck up day?” and “I hope I can go to leavers” (referring to requiring parent permission). Another student expressed she understood the school authorities’ predicament by saying, “They don’t want us to go too far”.

The majority of students engage in transgressions as a group (Reisch, 2007). The individual loses their usual sense of responsibility as they are part of a whole, rather than personally accountable. The individual can then take part in transgressions without the moral and social obligations felt by an individual (Nietzsche, 2009). On the periphery of all school rituals are the student controlled transgressions that mimic behaviors usually confined to adults such as drinking alcohol, driving and sexual relationships. As part of a recognised and acknowledged group, the students partake in the positive aspects of school rituals, yet the membership of the group also enables them to act in a way, that if left to the individual, they would be hesitant to perform. An individual student would be harshly punished for a transgression such as wrapping toilet paper around the school library, yet when performed as part of a group during ICH it is viewed as irritating shenanigans. Transgressions can provide a manageable point of conflict for the participants to challenge authority, and by doing so, aid in their transition from child to adult (Hoffman, 2003, 29).

Mass student transgression against the institution of school occurs at certain organised times, when all parties are aware that it is scheduled to occur. By actively taking part the participants are also exhibiting their commitment to the beliefs and values of the culture (Rossano, 2012, 529). Involvement indicates the commitment of the individual to that society’s values and beliefs (Rubin, 2009, 81). The study school formally organised a date especially for muck-up day, and the students were informed prior as to when it would occur. Private school students have a neo-tradition of bathing in the ocean wearing their uniform, yet this will only occur, in groups, on the day they have allocated for muck-up day. The transgression is accepted as a temporary condition, with all involved recognising that the suspension of the social order exists only for the duration of the event (Stephenson, 2010, 138). Once the transgression has altered from the temporary, to the permanent, the understanding between the participant groups is broken. The power then shifts to the

control of the institution regaining control of the ICH event, deciding on consequences, or causing it to cease completely.



Leavers write their names, in bright, but temporary marker, as an act of excited transgression on muck up day (Comet Bay College, Western Australia, October, 2014).

Although a display of rebellious power play, the act of transgressing requires dual compliance from all participant groups to occur. The act of transgressing acknowledges that maintaining the social order is the norm, and that the transgression is a temporary state (Julius, 2002). Once the occasion is over, the group will revert back to normality, the way society dictates things should be. The example of muck-up day demonstrates the temporary nature of transgressions. Muck-up day was devised to challenge the authority of the institution of school. The idea being that students who had diligently adhered to school rules during their entire education would ‘overthrow’ the school on their final day after exams by playing practical jokes such as spreading around shaving cream, or wrapping the school in toilet paper. The proceedings of muck-up day were firmly under the control of the student body. As the practical jokes developed into more sinister events such as property being

destroyed, schools became very concerned about the possibility of temporary fun resulting in permanent damage. Most school administrators took a punitive stance stating students that caused damage would not be allowed to graduate. There are a number of examples of schools not allowing students to graduate due to their behaviour at muck up day. In 2010, police in New South Wales formed a special 'muck up day squad' especially to deal with criminal activity resulting from out of control pranks (Harris, 2010).

Careful diversions by institutions occur so that control stays with the authority of the school. As mentioned previously, the study school successfully embedded 'dress up day' as a neo-tradition that was accepted and continued by the student body. The study school was not the only school that has introduced an alternative for its students in an attempt to ambush the students and gain control of any antics that may occur during muck up day. Penrhos College has introduced 'flower day' to celebrate the last day of school for their female students. The neo-tradition of flower day to replace muck up day is clearly the school administration's idea. School Principal Meg Melville states "The flower day tradition started more than 20 years ago as part of a push to do away with muck up day" (Hiatt, *The West Australian*, 25th Oct. 2013, 3). The school is in firm control of the event with the article stating "Confetti rains on the leaving Year 12s, who were given permission to redesign their uniforms for the farewell" (Hiatt, *The West Australian*, 25th Oct. 2013, 3). It could be argued that once you have received "permission" to resign your uniform, it ceases to be an act of transgression. Although introduced by the school's administration, the notion of flower day would not be a success unless it appealed in some way to the students. Vaz de Silver (2008) suggests that conceptual heritage still influences our perception of events. The notion of flowers being the central focus of a leavers' event at an all-girls school has the link through heritage to de-flowering. The throwing of flowers as a neo-traditional departure ritual could be understood as representative of the female students departing from the virginal institution of school where the students are morally controlled. The participants, however, are able to exercise agency in regards to the degree they commit to the ritual (Rubin, 2009, 81).

The diverse student population and the delicate power relations results in ambiguous understandings of ownership of ICH expressions. Not all students who attend the

ball, or leavers' week do so for the same reasons. Students can choose to not attend, or attend with their own understanding of the ICH expression. Rebellion against authority in ICH events is often subtle, such as lampooning or lack of enthusiasm via either passive or intentional disengagement (Nuttall & Tinson, 2011, 1730-1731). The ambiguous nature of ritual meaning is evident in O'Neil's discussion on a slave wedding conducted in 1861 in South Carolina. The white slave owners in attendance witness the traditional wedding ritual, performed in the manner to which they are accustomed, with a white preacher performing the ceremony. For the white slave owners, it was culturally correct, yet the slaves involved in the ceremony viewed it as an opportunity to gain some control of their own. On occasions the bride would wear red, which had ties to folklore in parts of Africa, and conveyed sexual connotations (O'Neil, 2009, 36). Slaves, who accepted a wedding function provided by their slave owners, did so for their own gain, not necessarily understood by their masters:

... African Americans attempted to use wedding rituals to assert autonomy, particularly when that assertion would not be understood by a white audience (O'Neil, 2009, 36).

The ambiguities of ICH interpretation reflect the conflicting agendas the participants intended to achieve through involvement (Husken, 2007, 273). Fackler (2010) uses the example of prisoners of war being ordered by their captors to play music, the demand to sing being a form of punishment. Religious prisoners were asked to sing hymns while being ridiculed, and political prisoners were asked to sing rally songs. The prisoners however, used the opportunity to play music to communicate and encourage each other. The unifying experience of singing together provided solidarity (Fackler, 2010, 610). The power shift experienced by the prisoners may have gone unnoticed to the captors, who believed they had full control, yet the prisoners' perspective was that they gained in the situation.

Despite the majority of students attending leavers' week, and supporting it in its current form, alternatives and neo-traditions are beginning to emerge for students disillusioned with the excessive alcohol consumption and selfish pleasure seeking associated with leavers' week. Schools and organisations have arranged charitable journeys overseas to aid in developing countries. *The Shire of Kalamunda* offered the opportunity for students to volunteer in Timor Leste (*An Alternative to Leavers'*

Week, Shire of Kalamunda, 2013). *The Margaret River Rotary Club* has been providing an annual event since 2002 for students to build amenities at a Timor Leste primary school. Although there were alternatives on offer, the majority of students selected the traditional leavers' week with only 11 students electing to attend the Rotary event in 2013 (*Alternative Leavers' Week*, Rotary, Margaret River, 2013). Some concerned parents are also becoming more involved with their child's participation in school departure rituals that were previously viewed as student controlled. Some parents have formed groups to monitor behaviour and safety of students away from home at leavers' week.

Although students transgress, the reality that it is only for a temporary period reinforces the significance and compliance to the maintenance of the status quo on all other occasions (Julius, 2002, 186). When power roles are reversed as is the case in the carnivalesque, it is considered to confirm the usual hierarchy. Santino explains the releasing of social tension for the benefit of the status quo:

Alternately, the inversion, exaggeration, and play of festival are viewed variously as symbolic resistance, a release of aggression, or a mechanism for maintaining the status quo (Santino, 2011, 64).

The temporary permission for students to transgress reinforces and reaffirms the dominant social structure that is usually present. The conditions attached to ICH practices are temporary. On the completion of the ICH event, the power relations resume to the recognised status quo. Therefore, ICH allows for transgressions, and for the challenging of power, but ultimately reinforces the dominant power structure.

Conclusion

The 2003 convention positions ICH as generationally transmitted. The 2003 convention creates the impression that young people are reliant on older members to pass down their knowledge (UNESCO, 2003). The convention represents the younger generation as being "in need of greater awareness" (UNESCO, 2003, 1) in regards to ICH continuance, and "in need of education" (Article 14, {a: i}, UNESCO, 2003, 6) on the importance of ICH. The findings of the study were that

the younger generation takes the lead on some aspects of school departure rituals, and the majority of students enthusiastically commit to the continuance of the practices.

Heritage discourse positions ICH as predominantly passed down from the older generation, to be inherited by the younger generation. The 2003 convention positions ICH as inherited generationally (Article 2:1, UNESCO, 2003, 2). The findings of this study are that younger people have adopted a number of neo-traditions in the past decade that demonstrate that they are not reliant on instruction from older generations. The introduction of neo-traditions demonstrates young people's involvement is not driven by the desire to uphold previous traditions, but rather that the younger generation is willing to adapt and embellish ICH to suit their own needs.

The study found that the interviewed participants expressed the belief that certain aspects of ICH were under their ownership or control. The students in particular identified a number of departure rituals as being under their ownership, rather than believing older generations were in a position of authority or "bearers" (Lenzerini, 2011, 102). This is in conflict with heritage discourse which represents ICH as being passed down through generations.

The findings of the study were that transgressions, such as muck up day, demonstrate young people attempt to claim independence from the older generations, rather than follow their instruction. The study found that students are willing to transgress as a group; however, they are hesitant to individually perform acts of transgression. Students are only willing to transgress in a recognised and accepted manner. In that regard, these transgressions confirm the status quo. The students' transgressions are tolerated by school authorities in the same way that peasants were tolerated by the ruling class in medieval festivals (Bakhtin, 1984). Although the power relations in ICH are ambiguous (Fackler, 2010; Husken, 2007), participants understand that during the prescribed period of time that the ICH event occurs, the altered social conditions are suspended. Transgressions will be tolerated by those in power on the condition that they are temporary.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

This thesis argues, through applying the example of school departure rituals, that heritage discourse does not adequately explain Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in the Western world performed by young people. An analysis of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003) was conducted to highlight the areas which did not account for vibrant, dynamic examples of ICH conducted by young people in a Western context. The analysis of the 2003 convention in Chapter Three concluded that the convention positioned ICH as under threat of dying out (Article 14, (b), UNESCO, 2003, 7), yet the study demonstrated that examples of school departure rituals are increasing. The recent increase in school departure rituals has been observed in popular media (Negus, ABC, 2004; Hughes, 2013; Hiatt, 2013; Pavia, 2008). The 2003 convention positions ICH as in need of protection. The convention describes ICH as under threat of “deterioration, disappearance and destruction” (UNESCO, 2003, 1). Chapter Three identified that the impression created by the 2003 convention is that ICH is considered to be fragile and vulnerable, yet the study found school departure rituals to be thriving. The convention expressed concern of the lack of interest from the younger generation, yet as discussed in Chapter Three and Chapter Seven, young people were the main instigators to the continuance of ICH practices such as muck up day, the after party and leavers’ week. School departure rituals have increased in occurrence and grandeur with recent neo-traditions being added, such as the example of ‘promposal’ examined in Chapter Five. Where the 2003 convention approached ICH as if it were delicate and rare, the study found ICH to be robust, common and localised.

The 2003 convention was an attempt to balance the world view of heritage (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009; Howell, 2013; Leimgruber, 2010). Chapter Three highlighted that in reaction to UNESCO’s historical Eurocentric understanding of heritage as residing in the built environment, scholarly heritage literature currently has a strong focus on expressions of ICH that occur in the developing world (Jacobs, 2014; Howell, 2013). The 2003 convention gives the impression that ICH in the developing world will be favoured, citing “taking into account the special needs of developing countries” (Article 18:1, UNESCO, 2003, 8). As discussed in Chapter Three, heritage literature infers that ICH is being predominantly performed in remote

areas by Indigenous communities and ethnic minorities (Smith & Waterton, 2009; Leimgruber, 2010; Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009; Jacobs, 2014). Despite the convention's tendency to focus implicitly on the developing world, the findings of this study identified that some examples of ICH are supported and enthusiastically performed in contemporary Western societies. The example of school departure rituals demonstrates that ICH is practised within our society and is relevant and applicable to our lives.

A prevailing view supported in heritage discourse is that heritage provides continuity with the past (Lowenthal, 2013; Lenzerini 2011, 110; Okpyo, 2013; Bozanic & Buljubasic, 2012; Margolies, 2011; UNESCO, 2003, 2). The findings of this study argue that, rather than focusing on the continuity that ICH provides with the past, participants anticipate ICH involvement as a future investment. Participants responded that they primarily performed expressions of ICH with a conscious awareness of the future. Participants reported that they performed ICH to create future memories. The study has shown that participants had an awareness that ICH involvement would be reflected on in their futures. As discussed in Chapter Four, the collecting of material memories, such as photographs taken at the ball or keeping a leavers' jacket, is evidence that the participants intended to remember their ICH involvement in their futures (Edwards, 1999; Batchen, 2004; Willumson, 2004). Participants indicated that they intended to create material memories for the dedicated purpose of remembering in the future. The creation of material memories signifies that the participants intended to utilise ICH to create memories to reflect on, rather than for a sense of continuity with the past.

ICH is represented in heritage literature as being under threat of globalisation (Askew, 2010; Bortolotto, 2010; Long & Labadi, 2010). The "grave threats" of globalisation and social transformation are explicitly mentioned in the preamble of the convention (UNESCO, 2003, 1). The 2003 convention is concerned that globalisation will result in the "deterioration, disappearance and destruction" of ICH (UNESCO, 2003, 1). The concern is that migration and modern life will result in separation from traditional culture (Labadi & Long, 2010; Kurin, 2007, 11; Margolies, 2007, 27). As Chapter Five examined, the blending and absorption of different cultures may result in a loss of distinct culture (Lenzerini, 2011; Bortolotto, 2010; Long & Labadi, 2010). The findings of the study were that globalisation can

enhance and revitalise ICH through providing intercultural connections. Chapter Five argued that international sharing of ICH events through social media sites and shared textual resources such as films, television series and songs have enhanced aspects of school departure rituals. Chapter Five examined how the sharing of textual resources, such as film, narratives and social media aids in the development of a collective memory (Wertsch, 2002, 2003; Halbwachs, 1992; Erll, 2008). The sharing of common sources demonstrates that intercultural contact, mainly through popular media, enhanced ICH and allowed for the development of a collective memory of how school departure rituals *should* be. Chapter Five offered Vignette One as an example of a young girl who chose not to attend the ball, perhaps due to the fact that she could not meet her expectations of how the ball *should* be. The findings of this study suggest that ICH involvement provided commonality in a diverse world. As discussed in Chapter Five, a sense of belonging was provided by the students who shared the experience of school departure rituals as a cohort group. Vignette Two acknowledged that not all students have the same experience, such as the example of the young homosexual male; however, most students reported that they were conscious that they were performing ICH as a group and this granted them a sense of membership affiliation. The findings of the study were that ICH involvement acted as a cohesive force in a multicultural environment, such as the example of a government school in Western Australia provided.

ICH is represented in heritage literature as being under threat of stagnating (Kaufman, 2013; Foster, 2011; Lenzerini, 2011). Due to pressures on ICH to adhere to outside standards and judgements, expressions of ICH will not be able to develop (Fairchild Ruggles & Silverman, 2009, 1; Foster, 2011; Junko, 2011; Bortolotto, 2010). Recording ICH was raised as a concern, and the example of *Toshidon* was given in Chapter Six to demonstrate issues of ownership, control and the possibility that recording may freeze ICH (Foster, 2011). The findings of this study do not agree with the perceived threat in heritage literature of stagnation. The study found that ICH involvement allows for creativity and innovation. Chapter Six outlined how the use of technology allows examples of ICH to be distributed to a large audience. Social networking sites such as *YouTube* and *Facebook* act to archive both official and personal recordings of ICH (Pietrobruno, 2013). Social networking sites also allow new perspectives and alternative understandings of ICH in both formal and

informal arenas (Pietrobruno, 2013; Yuan, 2014). The examples of *Techno Nezha* (Yuan, 2014), *eNanda* (Marschall, 2014) and *Ichpedia* (Park, 2014) were examined in Chapter Six to demonstrate that ICH can be revitalised to reach a new and wider audience. Chapter Six argued that participants allowed ICH events to evolve and did not focus on the past or feel a desire to adhere to ICH as it had been performed in the past. The study found that participants accessed ICH to allow for transition from student to adult, and transformations, especially in regard to their physical appearances.

ICH is represented in heritage literature as being passed down traditionally through generational contact (Bozanic & Buljubasic, 2012; Margolies, 2011; Okpyo, 2013). The 2003 convention promotes a view, either intentionally or not, that younger people are disinterested and disengaged from ICH. The 2003 convention's preamble contains the statement "the need to build greater awareness, especially among the younger generations" (UNESCO, 2003, 1). The study found that the younger generation participated with enthusiasm and it was often the younger people that instigated and organised ICH expressions. Chapter Seven argues that the example of school departure rituals provides neo-traditions as evidence that young people maintain the vibrancy of ICH, rather than relying on the older generations for instruction or guidance. In Chapter Seven, leavers' jackets and limousines were offered as examples of neo-traditions which have been introduced in the past decade as evidence of the vibrancy of school departure rituals. The convention states that young people may not be interested in ICH, stating in the preamble "...the need to build greater awareness, especially among the younger generations..." (UNESCO, 2003, 1) yet in many cases young people were the instigators of school departure rituals, such as the after party, muck up day and leavers' week. The study identified that young people were intrinsically motivated to be involved and even created or embellished expressions of ICH which they viewed as being under their control and/or ownership. The example given in Vignette Three, of a young girl who was not granted permission to attend the ball, yet chose to use leavers' week as her celebration of leaving school, demonstrates that different participants groups have control/or ownership over certain school departure rituals. Examples of transgressions, such as muck up day, were discussed in Chapter Seven to demonstrate participants' agency in ICH. Both flower day and dress up day

demonstrated the school administrations' desire to maintain control of school departure rituals, while muck up day, the after party and leavers' week demonstrated students' desire for autonomy. The convention positions ICH as predominately performed by elders. The convention states younger people need to be more involved (Article 14, (a:i), UNESCO, 2003, 6) yet the example of school departure rituals is driven by the enthusiasm and dedication of the younger generation.

Further studies are recommended on the use of technology to archive and disseminate examples of ICH. Newly introduced social networking sites have altered the ways in which people approach and value material memories that could not be studied in adequate detail in this thesis. This study did not have the required detail on photographs and objects as mnemonic devices that the topic deserves in Chapter Four on material memories. I recommend further study on developing a greater understanding of how material memories stimulate memory recall. The thesis did not have adequate length to explore this issue in the required detail.

The *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO, 2003) was adopted in the hope that heritage in the intangible form would be appreciated and protected. This thesis argues that despite the best intentions to safeguard and protect expressions of ICH, the 2003 convention has some implicit assumptions which positions ICH as being under threat of dying out, predominantly performed in the developing world and transmitted by the older generation. This study offers the example of school departure rituals to demonstrate that young people are interested in maintaining ICH and dedicated effort into organising events that were meaningful and purposeful to them.

The length of my teaching experience coincides with the length of time since the adoption of the 2003 convention. My observations over this period of time have seen a rapid increase in incidence and grandeur of school departure rituals. It will be interesting to observe how school departure rituals evolve in the future and if UNESCO is able to develop and revise the 2003 convention to one that is more representative of ICH that is dynamic and enthusiastically performed by young people in a Western context.

Appendix One: Interviews

Questions and responses of the author appear in **bold print** throughout the interview transcripts. The names of all interviewees have been changed to protect their identity.

Interviewees' Profiles

Students;

Student A, John. 17 year old male who immigrated from South African four years ago.

Student B, Mel. 17 year old female Maori who immigrated from New Zealand seven years ago. One parent employed in a working and living away from home situation.

Student C, Jordan. 18 year old male living independently. (Not under adult supervision). One parent in the Australian Navy.

Student D, Walter. 17 year old openly gay male living independently. (Not under adult supervision)

Student E, Alan. 16 year old male. One parent employed in a working and living away from home situation.

Student F, Simon. 16 year old Aboriginal male with one parent employed in a working and living away from home situation.

Student G, Kiara. 18 year old female with one parent in the Australian Navy.

Student H, Thomas. 17 year old openly gay male.

Student I, Kyla. 17 year old female.

Student J, William. 17 year old openly gay Aboriginal male.

Student K, Kaycee. 16 year old female of Emo subculture who has one parent in the Australian Navy.

Student L, Anna. 16 year old Maori female who immigrated from New Zealand three years ago.

Student M , Zoe. 17 year old female with one parent in the Australian Navy.

Student N, Chloe. 17 year old female of Emo subculture with one parent employed in a working and living away from home situation.

Student O, Julia. 17 year old Maori female who immigrated from New Zealand four years ago.

Parents;

Parent A, Roberta. Mother of one female aged 19 years old and one male student aged 16 years old.

Parent B, Andrea. Mother of two males aged 21 and 24 years old and one female aged 19 years old.

Parent C, Kate. Mother of one female aged 18 years old and one male aged 19 years old.

Parent D, Stella. Mother of twin males aged 19 years old and one female student 13 years old.

Parent E, Elaine. Mother of one male student aged 16 years old and two female students aged 14 and 12 years old. The family immigrated from the UK four years ago.

Parent F, Brenda. Mother of two female students aged 17 and 14 years old.

Teachers;

Teacher A, James. 62 year old male teacher with over 35 years of teaching experience. James has worked in both the private and government education sectors.

Teacher B, Jasmine. 38 year old female teacher with 15 years' teaching experience who immigrated to Australia from the UK eight years ago

Teacher C, Anthony. 37 year old male teacher with 12 years' teaching experience. Anthony has worked as a teacher in Thailand and in the private education sector in Western Australia.

Teacher D, Susan. 62 year old female teacher with 40 years' teaching experience. Susan has worked in both primary and secondary schools in the government sector in Western Australia.

Teacher E, Ben. 28 year old male teacher with six years' teaching experience in the government sector in Western Australia.

Teacher F, Sam. 26 year old female teacher with four years' teaching experience in the government sector in Western Australia.

Student Interviews

Interview One: Students

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 26/03/2012

Why do you think they have the school ball?

Student B, Mel: I think it is to do with memories, like your last year at school.

Student D, Walter: Celebrating the end of the year.

Student A, John: Have fun.

Student D, Walter: It's just an American tradition we've all taken on.

What do you believe is the history of the school ball?

Student D, Walter: Just Americans deciding to celebrate the last year.

Student A: John: Yeah.

Do you think it is important to have a school ball?

Student B, Mel: It makes the last year more fun because it makes something we all look forward to doing.

Student D, Walter: But they have it at the beginning of the year and 150 bucks at the beginning of the year, so, yeah, I'm not going.

Are you attending the school ball?

Student D, Walter, Student A, John, Student E, Alan & Student F, Simon: No.

And what is the reason you will not attend?

Student E, Alan: It costs too much.

Student A, John: Yeah.

So has it become something that not everyone can do?

Student B, Mel: Well yeah, because some people don't have that privilege of buying what they want for it so it has become one of those things that people spend a lot of money getting dresses and some people can't.

When you go to the school ball will you get a photo taken? Would you keep it?

Student B, Mel: Definitely. Yes I would keep it.

Why is it important to keep it?

Student B, Mel: Memories

Have you ordered a leavers' jacket?

Student A, John: Yep.

Student B, Mel: Yes.

What is the importance of the leavers' jackets?

Student E, Alan: Show everyone you're boss.

Student B, Mel: Show everyone we're still hanging in there, we are still at school.

Student D, Walter: It's another what's-a-ma-call them? That you buy on holidays?
Umm?

Student F, Simon: Souvenir?

Student D, Walter: Yeah, basically it's another souvenir from school.

So will you be keeping your leavers' jackets?

All students: Yes.

Student E, Alan: Yeah, I'll get it signed then keep it.

How important do you think it is to have the leavers' jackets?

Student D, Walter: Not really. It's another extra 70 bucks out of our pockets that we have to come up with.

Student F, Simon: 80!

Student B, Mel: I think they are worth it. They have a lot of memories when you see them later on in life.

Student D, Walter: But you could get just an old school shirt?

Student F, Simon: Yeah and get that signed and it does that job.

Is it important to keep something?

Student E, Alan: Yeah.

Student B, Mel: But it can be something as little as a picture from school and it will bring back all those memories that you need.

Student D, Walter: A card folded in half?

Student B, Mel: Or a piece of paper?

Student D, Walter: With a picture with 'Leavers 2012' or something like that?

(Student C, Jordan joins the group late due to illness)

Why do we have a school ball?

Student C, Jordan: It's a tradition. Good to do something, it's your last year of school.

Why do you think it is important?

Student C, Jordan: Ummm? I don't know. Get to know your year group, good atmosphere like, you've been at school for 12 years and you need something good, last year of school and there is nothing else to do, so why not?

Have you bought a leavers' jacket?

Student C, Jordan: No.

What do you think about the leavers' jackets?

Student C, Jordan: I don't really care about them. I just think it is extra money to spend.

How important is it for you to have something physical to keep from school?

Student C, Jordan: I suppose it could be important. Really like memorabilia that you could look back at, yeah, so it would be important then. Yes.

Thank you.

Interview Two: Students

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 07/03/2012

What reason do you think the school ball is held?

Student G, Kiara: Well I reckon it is held because we need a break and that it's fun.

Student I, Kyla: And it is to celebrate that we have finished school.

Student H, Thomas: Year 12 and all that.

Student I, Kyla: And that we are becoming adults.

Student G, Kiara: Agreed.

What do you understand is the history of the school ball? Where did it come from?

Student G, Kiara: It would be like old olden days, parties and stuff, like in old ages and that.

Student I, Kyla: I don't know.

What about the leavers' jackets? What do you understand is the history of the leavers' jackets?

Student I, Kyla: Signify that we are leaving and never coming back.

Student H, Thomas: And to remember it all.

Student I, Kyla: And all that because most the time they have everyone's' names on it to remember who was there.

Student H, Thomas: And that we have achieved Year 12.

And where do you think the leavers' jackets came from? The idea?

Student J, William: I think it would have originally come from the Year 12s. They thought up the idea and put it into practice.

And do you think it is important to have a school ball?

Student G, Kiara: I wouldn't say it's not life threatening or anything.

Student J, William: Not (pause). It would be important to the year 12s once they knew about the ball, but if there wasn't any ball to begin with, they would just go out and celebrate on their own.

Student I, Kyla: Yeah, Leavers!

So how valuable do you think it is to have the ball and leavers' jackets?

Student H, Thomas: Not really that valuable.

Student J, William: Well depends on the person because to me I do think it is valuable. Because, when I leave high school I want, I would love to have a piece of something like to remember the high school days and everything.

Student G, Kiara: Yes, because you might toss out your uniform or give it to someone.

Student J, William: And you have to celebrate the end of the year.

How important is it for you to have a memento of the event? For example will you have a photo taken?

Student I, Kyla: Yes.

Student H, Thomas: Yes, so that I remember it all of the time.

Why is it important to keep something?

Student I, Kyla: So that you have, like you know, photographic memory of the night.

Student J, William: And prove that it was real.

Student H, Thomas: And how amazing it was.

Student I, Kyla: And how pretty you looked.

And where did you get your ideas, you haven't been to the school ball yet, about what the school ball will be like?

Student I, Kyla: Movies and previous Year 12s.

Student H, Thomas: Books

Student G, Kiara: Prom Night! Even though that was about some crazy psychotic teacher coming back to kill some student you got the idea that it was kind of fun.

Student H, Thomas: Yes, what about Twilights?

Student G, Kiara: I know.

Student I, Kyla: There are a lot of teenage movies that have some type of ball or prom.

How do you think you will feel about your ball experience in future?

Student G, Kiara: Well, I'm not going, because I can't afford it and I can't really be bothered with it but I hope the others who do go do enjoy it and remember it.

Student I, Kyla: Yeah

Thank you.

Interview Three: Students

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 12/03/2012

Why do you think we have the school ball?

Student N, Chloe: It kind of gets the kids excited, gives them something to look forward to. Like this year is a really stressful one, so having the ball kind of weighs it a little bit.

Student L, Anna: And behaviour

Student M, Zoe: It kind of makes you want to finish school because there is something there.

Why do we have the school ball?

Student K, Kaycee: To celebrate and all of our work

Student O, Julia: Yeah.

Student M, Zoe: As a reward.

Student K, Kaycee: Yeah, that's what I was going to say

How important is it to have a school ball?

Student N, Chloe: Pretty important.

Student O, Julia and Student L, Anna: Yeah.

Student K, Kaycee: Because if we didn't have it, it would be like "why are we here?"

Student M, Zoe: It's encouraging.

Will you be having a photo taken at the school ball?

All students: Yes. (Laughs)

Student N, Chloe: For sure.

Student K, Kaycee: Definitely.

Why do you think it is important to have a photo taken?

Student L, Anna: Memories and stuff.

Student O, Julia: Yeah.

Student N, Chloe: Of us in that happy stage of our lives.

Student K, Kaycee: Memories.

Would you have a photo taken at home before you go to the school ball?

All students: Yes

And would you have a taken also taken at the ball, a professional photo?

All students: Yes.

Are you planning to keep your photo?

All students: Yes.

Why is it important to keep?

Student N, Chloe: Memories.

Student O, Julia: Memories.

Student K, Kaycee: Memories of the time.

Student N, Chloe: To show others.

Student K, Kaycee: To show your kids.

Student L, Anna: To show the grandkids.

Where did you get your ideas about the school ball from?

Student L, Anna: Photos.

Student O, Julia: Films.

Student M, Zoe: The past year 12s.

Student K, Kaycee: I remember, when I was little, really young in a country town, there was this girl walking down the street in this huge dress and I asked my mum

what it was all about and she told me it was about the ball and ever since then, I was about five, I have been looking forward to it since I was five.

So it is your turn this year. How do you think you will think of your experience of the school ball in the future?

Student N, Chloe: Probably preparing us for our wedding day (Laughs).

Student O, Julia: Yeah.

Thank you.

Reflection Interview One: Students

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 25/06/2012

You were not able to go to the school ball so how do you feel about missing it?

Student G, Kiara: Well actually I didn't want to go.

How did you feel about not going? When you saw other people's photos and everything?

Student G, Kiara: I didn't care. I was at home chilling. Because I am, I was brought up in, to not really do that kind of stuff. My family don't do celebrating things. Like my family is not that fancy. So for me doing that, staying home is like just normal. I don't have any regrets or anything, so yeah.

You have a leavers' jacket, is that going to be something that you will keep to remember school?

Student G, Kiara: Yep, I'm going to wear it all the time.

And are you going to Leavers?

Student H, Thomas: Yes!

Student I, Kyla: We think so.

Student J, William: We hope so.

Student H, Thomas: That is if Kyla gets her licence (laughs).

Do you see Leavers as something different than something organised by the school?

Student G, Kiara: Yes, Yeah.

Student H, Thomas: Yeah.

Student G, Kiara: Yes, because with Leavers you get to go drinking if you want, you can do drugs if you want. You're not tried down by (Student H, Thomas: parents) and teachers.

Student J, William: And it gives you a kind of freedom.

Student G, Kiara: And it doesn't affect your grade at all! It's kind of like, Woot!

Reflecting on your ball, you didn't go with a partner. How do you feel about that now?

Student J, William: Well at the time I was looking for a partner to go, but then I couldn't find one so I didn't. Once I got there it wasn't really fazing me because it wasn't a partner thing. It was just a general ball, it was more groups.

Student H, Thomas: Me neither.

When you look back you think you had a good time and you didn't miss out because you didn't go with a partner?

Student J, William and Student H, Thomas: No.

You also have a leavers' jacket, Will that be something you remember from school?

Student J, William: Definitely. I have already planned to hang it up, put it on display.

(Discussion on types of designs of leavers' jackets)

How do you feel about Leavers?

Student J, William: I think it is like the ability to have freedom and it's not like a school controlled event, you go on your own and enjoy and that is about it.

You went to the ball with a female partner but you asked a male partner? What was the story around that?

Student H, Thomas: Yes, well. I asked him but he said he didn't really want to go because he doesn't like dancing or dressing up in a suit and all that.

You would have been uncomfortable in taking a male partner?

Student H, Thomas: No, not really.

Looking back do you regret that you didn't get to take your partner?

Student H, Thomas: I kind of do because I would have liked to have been with him on that night, it was all good, a bit upsetting that, being that, ummm what's the word?

Student J, William: Disappointing?

Student H, Thomas: Yes, disappointing that he didn't want to go with me.

You took a female partner. How do you feel about that now? Did you still have a good time?

Student H, Thomas: It was sort of fun, but I was, we didn't really dance. I was with William for most of the night pretty much.

You also have a leavers' jacket. Will you take it away from school to remember?

Student H, Thomas: Yes.

And you are also going to Leavers?

Student H, Thomas: Yes I am! With my friends.

Student G, Kiara: I was going to say that I read in a magazine that a girl wanted to take her partner to a ball and her school said no. She moved schools and that school allowed her to take her partner to the ball. It was a private school as well, so it was like wow.

What about Muck up day?

Student G, Kiara: I heard that we were not allowed to do it?

Student J, William: Yeah, because like last year, apparently if you do muck up day you will be suspended and then you won't graduate. So I really don't want to take the risk. But more like a casual event, like, we might do free dress. Last year they did the superman stuff.

Student G, Kiara: All Cosplay.

Why do you think the school doesn't want you to do muck up day?

Student G, Kiara: Because they obviously don't want us to go too far.

Student H, Thomas: They don't want to have to clean it up.

Student I, Kyla: Egging everybody.

Student G, Kiara: And destroying property.

Student J, William: I think Leavers would be enough. Not destroying the school or anything.

Thank you.

Reflection Interview Two: Students

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 04/07/2012

Would you be able to tell me what happened with your ball experience?

Student I, Kyla: I wasn't allowed to go to the ball because of my attendance at school. Because they said that if you didn't have good attendance you were not allowed to attend that school ball.

So it was the school that decided you could not go?

Student I, Kyla: Yes.

How did you feel about that?

Student I, Kyla: I was upset that I couldn't go because I had spent so much on the dress and stuff.

Was it mainly the money you were upset about?

Student I, Kyla: No, I wanted to get dressed up all pretty and get ready in my dress.

What are your feelings about not being able to go?

Student I, Kyla: I'm not too upset now. I was upset that I could go (at the time). Apparently it was really crap anyway. So (Shrugs).

You have your leavers jacket, is that something you will take from school to remember?

Student I, Kyla: Yeah.

And are you going to Leavers?

Student G, Kiara: Yes

Student I, Kyla: Yes

And do you feel Leavers is more in your control?

Student I, Kyla: Yes, umm, I had a year 8, 9, 10 and 11 ball so I'll remember them.

Thank you.

Parent Interviews

Interview One: Parent A, Roberta

Recorded at Interviewer's home on 14/03/2012

Why do you think the school ball is held?

I think it is to celebrate the twelve years of school and as a celebration of their achievements over those years. And as a social interaction.

Do you think it is valuable to continue the school ball?

I think it is important to recognise the achievements of the students so I think they need to have a social outing where they can be with all their friends and feel special and important after spending so many years of hard work at school.

Did your child have a leavers' jacket?

Yes they did.

Did she value her leavers' jacket?

Yes, she loved her leavers' jacket. It was really important to her. She left school two years ago and she still has her leavers' jacket. She does still wear it. Definitely she will keep her leavers' jacket. It is probably one of her prized possessions in her wardrobe that she likes to wear.

Did you take a photo of your child before she went to the school ball?

Yes, and they had professional photographers at the ball and we purchased photos online through the professional photographers and we have them in our album at home.

Is it important for you to keep the photos?

Definitely! I think it is one of the good mementos because they are all dressed up and they look so lovely and beautiful. She looked all grown up. I think it is a good stepping stone for all of her achievements and for her life for that period of time. It is extremely important, I think at one of those times, for instance when she is 21, it would be a photo that we would obviously go back and look at and replay for being part of an important milestone in her life.

Did she keep a photo of herself as well?

I would say she has, yes.

What values do you think were promoted in the school ball?

I think the values by the school were to celebrate. Basically to have a celebration of all the years of hard work and to signal a change in their life where now they are not at school and going onto further studies or jobs or apprenticeships or whatever it may

be. So I think the school ball was always as a fun thing. Also, as a milestone and a get together with the students and the teachers.

What about the graduation ceremony? Was it any different?

Yes, it was. Yes, because the graduation was held in the school grounds and it was probably a lot more formal and a lot more of the parents. Even though, the particular school my children attend, the actual parents were invited to the school ball. We declined to go because we thought it was an event for her, rather than us. We didn't want the focus to be on us and also it was quite a cost. So we went to her graduation and that was a really significant night.

Thank you.

Interview Two: Parent B, Andrea

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 01/03/2012

What do you understand as the tradition behind the school ball?

I think it comes from American TV. In films also you see a lot about the ball, or the prom is what it is called of course. The movie will show, especially if it is a romance, the couple going to the prom.

Did you feel differently when you daughter went to the ball as opposed to your sons.

Yes, it was more expensive for the girl. I do think the boys enjoyed themselves more to be honest. My daughter did get a lot more involved. I loved every minute of it all the same. It is a special time of their lives when you can get involved. Often at that age it is often hard work, so it is lovely to be involved in something they are excited about. That special time in their lives when they are growing up, but you are still in your control. At a time in their lives when everything is often difficult, it is really nice to be able to share in their excitement of something nice that they want to do.

Did you take and keep photos of them going to the ball?

For sure! I still have them. I kept them because they all looked so perfect and cleaned up. There is not many times when you can get them looking formal, the best they are ever going to look really.

Did they have leavers' jackets?

I can't remember my sons having them, but I do know that my daughter had one. She still has it, but I haven't seen her wear it. It was signed by her friends, so it is more of a keepsake.

Where do you think the idea of the leavers' jackets came from?

I think it must be an American idea. Once again from movies and TV I think.

Thank you.

Interview Three: Parent C, Kate

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 01/03/2012

You have a son and a daughter. Did you feel differently about them attending the ball?

Slightly, yes. I thought it was harder for my son to get a date than for my daughter, so yes. As a mum you have to take them under your wing and help them. My son was young for his age and he didn't know what he had to wear so I had to take him to the hire place and get the suit and make sure he had a matching cummerbund with his date.

Where do you think those traditions came from?

I think in the modern era, like my kid's ages, it has come from American television with the proms and that kind of thing. Prior to that I think in my generation it was from the debutante ball, so basically you went to your debutante ball so that you were allowed to enter society, not that I was debutante because I was the wrong religion at the time, but I think it was from there.

How valuable do you think the school ball is?

I think it is very valuable because there is a lot of things that go into it like showing them how to do different dances, how to behave themselves in a very posh environment and how to ask someone to go with them.

Do you children have leavers' jackets? Where do you think that tradition came from?

That is a very American thing that came from the American letterman jackets. It does help them stand out from the rest of the school and makes them look important and that kind of thing.

Did your children keep their leavers' jackets?

Oh yes, and still wear them. They left school four or five years ago and they still wear them, with a sense of pride. I think because of the school they were in has a huge amount of culture attached to anything to do with the school. Because they had a really good time wearing them and they had a really good time being at the school.

Do you think there is a different mood in the school ball compared to the graduation ceremony?

The graduation had a lot more pomp and ceremony attached to it maybe because my kids were in the school bands, so it was like being part of the ceremony, part of the band and part of the awards. Whereas the ball is more of a social thing but there are lots of places you go and have your photo taken before and things like that.

Do you think it is important that we have a school ball?

Yes, because it gives the younger students something to aspire to. They need to know that if they don't toe the line, or they don't do well in their studies, that they are not going to get to go. They should be earning the right to do that right from the start.

Did you keep and take photos of your students as they left for the school ball?

Certainly did. It is one of those occasions other than their wedding day when they all as good as their ever going to look, all polished and beautiful. Also their partners helped to make that so special for them. Everyone was so well dressed and that kind of thing.

Thank you.

Interview Four: Parent D, Stella

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 09/03/2012

Did your children, the twins, attend the school ball?

Yes.

Did you think it was important as a parent for them to attend?

Yes, absolutely!

For what reasons did you think it was important?

I'm a big believer in having special occasions to look back on and in your adult years you can look back on the things that you did in high school. It is almost like it is a coming of age. Something special and everyone needs something special to dress up for and have a big fuss made. I just think it is a lovely part of all that.

Did you take photos of them at home before they left for the school ball?

Yes we did, in their suits. We also took photos before with the whole group that went into the *Hummer*. And then we received, we got copies of photos, the official photos from the ball.

Are you planning on keeping the photos?

Yes, and they are going to keep some of their photos. They have talked about having photos in frames on their walls, yes.

Why do you think it is important for them to have the photos?

It is just a lovely thing for them to look back on. They have a very large group of friends, which I'm very glad about. It was never three or four but 20 odd. There was always someone that they could hang out with and that ball was part of that social situation that they could be with them and enjoy that time with them. They have had lots of photos taken with various people, so it was the group one, which was the one

they wanted to have on their wall. It was, you know, funny photos where people were doing all different things. So it wasn't the formal one, but of their big group of friends.

Do you think it is valuable to have a school ball?

It is really one of those coming of age things. They have put in all those years of work that, it's a celebration if you like of all of those things. Everyone loves dressing up and I guarantee there are parents all over the world who are so glad their kids had to dress up all formal because they have really lovely photos of them with their hair and, for the girls, makeup and all the rest of it. But it is lovely that you can have a photo of them that you can show off beautifully dressed and very smart. Even for the boys in their suits. They look so good.

Do you think the school ball should continue?

Yes, definitely. My only concern is the expense because each year it seems to be becoming more and more imperative that they spend so much money. (Discussion on prices). Now: their hair, makeup, nails, the *Hummer*, the whole works is becoming a very expensive exercise. The fact that they have it is wonderful, but the expense. I had boys, two of them, but for the girls it would be harder, much harder.

Do you think there are some new traditions that have come in?

Yes, it seems to be very much more Americanised than it was. I'm not saying that it is a bad thing because I love all that pomp and ceremony and the dressing up of the tables and all that stuff. When I was at school it was just a dinner dance. There wasn't nearly as much decorations. The girls didn't go to the hairdressers, the nails and there were no limousines that you took to and from the event. Parents dropped you off and parents picked you up. That part of it only seems to have happened in the past ten years. They are accepted and expected as normal now.

Did your children have leavers' jackets?

No they chose not to because of the expense. At the same time we had to pay for the graduation and the ball tickets and also their gridiron shirts. With two of them it has to stop somewhere. If it had been timed differently, or we could have paid at a different time, they could have had the leavers' jackets as well.

Do you feel differently about your daughter going to the ball than your sons?

My daughter insisted, even at the year 11 river cruise, on sitting down on the street and watching the girls getting ready for the buses, because she wanted to see all their dresses, all their beautiful dresses, and she was asking me in year seven, “What am I going to be allowed to spend on a dress when it is my turn to do all of this?” I think I will love it just as much. The only thing it will be more effort because the boys could walk into a store and hire a suit where with my daughter it will be a lot of shopping and way before, there will be hours of preparation. I will be just as happy that she goes to the ball. I grew up watching the American shows, so I quite like that and that they make a special fuss of these kids for all those years of working and being together.

Thank you.

Interview Five: Parent E, Elaine

Recorded at Comet Bay College 09/03/2012

How important do you think the ball is?

I think it is very important and it is just part of growing up. They get the chance to dress up and just have fun. I think that it is important that they get to dress up and be smart and be grown up and feel grown up. To be dressed nicely and feel good. Just have fun.

Why do you think we have the school ball?

I think it is just to mark the end of an era, so it is really important to say good bye, almost to your childhood and progress into adulthood.

What changes have you noticed in the school ball?

We didn't have a school ball. We had a dinner which was at the school. But I do love this because he is excited and he has got a girlfriend and she has been out and bought her dress. She bought his tie and they have been out suit shopping which is something I never actually thought he would do. Student relationships are enhanced.

They have all been looking for dates, they have been asking the girls and the girls have been asking the boys to go as a partnership.

Has your son ordered a leavers' jacket?

Yes he has.

What do you think is the history of the leavers' jackets?

Well we don't really know because we are from the UK and we have never had leavers' jackets, the uniform was exactly the same from day one to the last day, so never really seen the leavers' jacket before. But I really like the idea and it shows some individuality and shows that they are growing up and branching out.

Do you think he will keep his leavers' jacket?

Yes, absolutely. It is just for memories, for good memories. He has actually got his year seven t-shirt and he has kept that as well just to feel, well the memories.

Are you planning to take a photo of him before he goes to the ball?

Yes, absolutely! He would have his own copies. It is just for the memories and to see how far they have come in that time, say from grade eight to now and how they have matured to men, because they are men now.

Do you think the ball is valuable and should continue?

Yes definitely.

Thank you.

Interview Six: Parent F, Brenda

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 09/03/2012

What do you think of the school ball?

I think it is a good idea because after school you just don't know if she will see any of these kids again. So at least she is going to have some memory and record of having a good time with them, a nice time at school. I don't think it is that valuable. I

think it is good socially, but as far as valuable, not unless those people she is going to the ball with are going to be friends that she has for life then I don't see a lot of value in it. But it is valuable in a sense of them letting loose at the end of the year. It's their last year.

Why do you think schools put on a ball?

Personally I think it is just an outlet for the students. It's a way of them celebrating their final year.

What do you understand as the history of the school ball?

My first thought is that it is an American idea. Because I never had a school ball when I was at school and that was a long time ago! I don't personally know anyone in that period of time, whether there were any school balls, but I just see it as an American idea. Something that has come from an American influence, you know, TV, the kids see it and think it is a good idea. Possibly it was the students' idea "Hey, they have a ball, let's do it here". I don't think it's been Australian culture or an Australian cultural idea.

What are your daughter's expectations of the ball?

The general idea that I am getting is that she just wants to let loose. I think she just wants to have fun with her friends and celebrate the fact that she has worked really hard, she has worked fairly hard all through her school life. For her it is a way of saying "Hey, it's over, we have had fun, let's get loose".

Have you noticed any new traditions?

The big tradition that I am seeing is the long gown. The bigger the better, the most elaborate the better. It is a bit of a competition of who can have the nicest dress.

Is your daughter getting a leavers' jacket?

She hasn't mentioned it to me but I imagine she will. Just as a keepsake.

Do you notice a different mood towards graduation than the school ball?

Yes, I do actually. The kids do get dressed up for the last assembly but they are always looking forward to the ball. I think it is a shame the ball falls before the kids

graduate. It would be really good if it was on the same night or the night after. I think the kids look more forward to, and are less embarrassed about, the school ball than they are graduation because they are out the front and everyone is looking at them.

Will you be taking and keeping a photo of your daughter?

I hope she takes as many photos as possible. Any parent would think the same way, and that is, a lot of these kids that she knows she is not going to know all her life. It will be good to for her to say “Hey, remember my ball, eww that dress”. (Laughs) She will be able to remember those people so I think it is a good idea to have photos, definitely. And they look just like adults, so it is quite emotional.

Thank you.

Teacher Interviews

Interview One: Teacher A, James

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 08/03/2012

Can you identify when you think the leavers’ jackets started to appear?

A common tradition in government schools? Umm, I was in a school in the mid-80s when we had leavers’ jackets and the kids really liked it. But then I went to other schools where they didn’t. I think commonly in the last 10 to 15 years in high schools and now it seems to have filtered into primary schools as well.

Where do you think the tradition came from?

I think originally it was an aspect of social engineering on the part of the teachers in terms of trying to create a sense of cohesion amongst the students and try to encourage them to feel that uniform was a good thing. So I think it was initially something that was engineered as social control trying to make them feel part of a group and pull their head in a bit, or some of the norms that teachers in particular would like to see them adopt.

Why do you think the leavers’ jackets are important to the students?

In the same way that we made hats acceptable, whereas 20 years ago you couldn't get a kids to wear a hat, I think we have managed pretty successful to make it something that they see as part of their group identity. You get the odd ones that won't but because they don't want to be part of that identity and whether that is them being a bit smarter than the average or not having enough money or whatever. Most of them seem quite happy to wear it. Nowadays most schools include students in the process of choosing the ones they have. I think that has probably helped as well. Giving them at least a sense that they are being consulted. Whether that is true or not, in many cases it is Hobson's choice; you can have this one or almost nothing else because that one is more expensive or has pink collar or something like that.

What would you like the students to learn from the school ball?

Probably the opposite of what in many cases they take to it, because in the 21st century it was become an aspect of prestige. How much money can you spend on it? Who has got the best dress? Can I have seat in the pink stretch *Hummer* etc. Where it should be a reasonable aspect of socialisation I think it has been affected dramatically by a sense of materialism that they have to try and outdo each other. It is interesting because you notice that often the boys that don't go are the boys that are too shy to talk to the girls or those from perceived poorer backgrounds. Some don't go because they can't afford it.

Have you seen it change over the period of time you have been teaching?

Yes, it used to be a cheap, low key thing. Sometimes run at school or the local hall. I don't think we charged the kids at all and they just had to wear neat formal dress and have a good time.

When did you notice it started to change?

About 12 years ago.

Have you noticed any new traditions being introduced?

Needing a stretch limo to get there and get home is relatively recent in government schools. Private schools have probably been doing it a lot longer, for obvious reasons. The after school balls are probably not as big and more inside and confined. They hire hotel rooms and that, and have smaller more isolated functions whereas it

used to be more of a mass celebration. Get together and do something silly. I think some of the males and females form relationships which last a bit longer simply because they see that as a romanticised vision of living happily-ever-after.

Do you think it is important to have the school ball?

No I don't think it is important. It is highly desirable that we have a variety of functions that all of the students feel that they can participate in. I don't have a problem with the school ball, but it is important that all the students have access to some kind of celebration and socialisation and normalising, shall we say, of the male/female relationships that we think people should investigate as part of their rite-of-passage.

Thank you.

Interview Two: Teacher B, Jasmine

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 08/03/2012

What have you noticed about school rituals?

We didn't have any rituals, any school balls or Leavers, so since coming over here from the UK, I have noticed a different culture with lots more Leavers and balls. I have been here for eight or nine years and I think it is still the same emphasis on the ball so it hasn't changed that much.

What would you like the students to learn through involvement in the school ball?

I think they need to appreciate what is done for them and to realise that they have to put in to get then best out of it. Most of the students just see it as a bit of fun and not really anything major. It is a leaver's thing to do in year 12. If it wasn't there, there would be complaints, but after a few years the kids probably wouldn't notice.

What do you understand is the history of the school ball?

I have no idea (laughs). When we started this school, they only hear it from their mates from other schools that there is a school ball and I do not know where it originally came from.

What reasons do you think the ball is held?

Just as a final accomplishment for getting that far. Each year they do have events for each year group and each year it is supposed to be a better and better event. I think the final one is showing that they are moving on, going into adulthood and it is a major event, a big venue, just saying that they completed it. It used to be at the end of the year, and it would be a big completion, "So exciting, we're finished". So that is the main reason.

Do you think it is important that they have a school ball?

Yes and no. I think yes because they still need to have the celebration part of it but I think that nowadays because it is at the beginning of the year it is not actually celebrating the completion of schooling and kids nowadays think of that as Leavers, outside of school, not actually at the school ball. So I don't think it is for the same reasons anymore.

When did you notice that the leavers' jackets had become a part of year 12?

Ever since I came over here (Australia). Every school I have worked at they have had something different for the year 12s. Not necessarily jackets but identification for last year. In my overseas teaching experience I didn't see it. It was just uniform, that was it, no change.

How important do you think photos are for the students?

The professional photographer I would say no, not at all, because the use of mobile phones and that kind of stuff, they already had a whole load of photos and took their own photos. You can see that in the uptake of the professional ones. Not many people actually bought them. I think for memories sake, the ones they take themselves are really important. Especially for their parents, more memories for their parents. It is the last time their kids are kids, sort of. So I think the parents will find it just as amazingly to keep as their year 7 photo and their kindy photo. It's like their pathway through life.

Do you think the school ball should continue?

Yes, but I still think it should be moved back to the end of the year. It got moved to the beginning of the year because some year 12s only stayed to go to the ball and people going for ATAR scores, when it comes, they are distracted by the dress and aren't working as much. It is not celebrating the finishing of school. It should be at the end of the year after exams, put it back in there.

Thank you.

Interview Three: Teacher C, Anthony

Recorded at the interviewer's home on 02/03/2012

What would you like to see the students learn through participation in the school ball?

I don't mind if they don't really learn anything, they do enough of that already; I would just like them to have a good time.

What do you think is the history of the school ball?

It's the end of the year, the end of their journey through formal education together and it's a bit of a rite-of-passage into adulthood I suppose.

What do you understand as the history of the leavers' jackets?

I don't understand its history. When I graduated in 1992 we didn't have it and by the time I was teaching in Australia again, which was 10 years later, it had come in, so I don't know when that had slipped in but it was, for me, somewhere between 1992 and 2002.

What reasons do you think the students like to have a leavers' jacket?

They like to have it because they sense the light at the end of the tunnel. It separates them from the years below, they see the light at the end of the tunnel, year 12 is finishing. It is something they have seen the previous year 12s do and they looked forward to it, it separates them from those years below them and it's a privilege.

They like to have their names, and their nicknames, and it has the list of all the names so they can keep it forever and their name is part of that group, the class of 2012, for example.

Why do you think it is important for the students to have their photo taken at the school ball?

It's a bit of a laugh. They remember it and they get the photo. School balls I have been at year 12s I have taught have asked me to have a class photo done with them. The last school ball, which was two weeks ago, I couldn't attend, so they have taken a photo of their whole class and want to get a photo and *Photoshop* me into it (laughs).

What does the school ball mean to you when you attend as a teacher?

To be honest it is a little bit of a pain. I don't really like them for myself. I only go every third year because I will pick up a year 10 homeroom and have them for year 11 and 12 and when I have a year 12 homeroom I will go to the ball. But for me it is a little bit of a chore. I don't really enjoy it very much. I pretend to, because it is my duty, but I would rather stay at home.

Do you think the practice of the school ball should continue?

Yes, the students love it. They look forward to it. It gives them a chance to do something that is a little bit of a fairy-tale, many of them won't get to do a ball again and if they do it won't be in their youth, it will be when they are older and they will only be 17 once, so why not!

Thank you.

Interview Four: Teacher D, Susan

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 09/03/2012

What changes have you seen over the period of time you have been teaching?

I suppose they have become a little more elaborate, definitely, the ball has always been a big occasion, but they have become more elaborate. With the limousines and things, but they have always spent a fortune on dresses.

When did you notice the change?

I have been a year coordinator for 20 years, so I have been dealing with balls for about 20 years. They were already starting to use limousines back then but it might have been 50 percent, whereas now it is almost 100 percent.

Do you think the school ball is an important event?

I think it is. It is a big social event. It is probably, for a lot of the students the only time they ever get the chance to go to a ball. It's their one big occasion. To get dressed up, and to feel like princes and princesses. And to feel super special. And it is a nice combination after being at school. It is very costly but I think it is important. I had two children go to the school ball. I personally found it exciting. For the girl, there was lots of shopping! It was beautiful seeing them all dressed up and all the excitement. Yeah, I thought it was great. I didn't mind it at all.

Do you think it should continue?

Yes, as long as it doesn't get out of hand. I actually think they are starting to pull back a little bit. I think people have realised how much money is being wasted, and money is being wasted. The girls don't need \$800 dresses.

When did you notice the leavers' jackets coming into common use?

Probably 15 years ago.

What do you think is the historical context of the leavers' jackets?

Umm, I don't really know to be honest. Some people seem to think that it is an American tradition. I think when I started they just had t-shirts, the ones that we had just had 'out of here' written on them, and it was just an excitement, something to wear for the last couple of weeks. Then it was a case of one-upmanship. Then they went to the next level with the rugby tops and then they tried, one-upmanship, that's how I saw it, just trying to beat the last school and be better and now it has become a

tradition. It has to be good to wear something after five years of wearing a uniform, wear something different.

How important to do think it is to keep a memento from school.

I don't think it is very important at all because all my children's' photos are in the bottom drawer somewhere. I suppose it is nice, you do look back if you come across it accidentally. It jogs their memory. The leavers' jackets are something that they can keep. They might wear it after school for a couple of years and when we have reunions kids tend to drag them out. It is a good way of remembering who was in the class that year.

Thank you.

Interview Five: Teacher E, Ben

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 09/03/2012

Have you noticed any changes in the school ball now compared to your own experience?

My ball was in 2001. I haven't noticed any changes; however, this year they have a themed ball. It will be a masquerade ball, we didn't have a theme.

Why do you think the school ball is held?

I think that it is to give recognition to the students that they have achieved something and that, that achievement should be celebrated. I think it is because it is a transition in their lives; it's a milestone and a rite-of-passage to complete year 12. This is one way of acknowledging this as well.

How important is it that the students have a school ball?

I think it is very important. I think firstly it is something that brings them together as a group. It gives them positive memories of schooling and I think those positive memories are important because it is going affect their attitudes and values towards education which they pass on to their kids.

When did you notice that the leavers' jackets were starting to become a tradition?

When I was in year 7, that would have been about 1996, we actually had a leavers' jacket in primary school! I kept my leavers' jackets, particularly my primary school one. A lot of my friends signed the jacket, so therefore I have a lot of lasting memories from those particular friends of mine. Also that was a form of my identity back then, wearing that jacket, so just looking back at what I was wearing at that time and the way that I felt at that time connects back to looking at that jacket. It associates with it. I didn't wear it long after school personally, but I know people that did. Some people for the next year would wear it up to the local shopping centre and when they were out and about because they felt proud it. They felt it made them feel part of the community, made them feel older because only the older students in their schooling community were able to wear them, so for them it associated with the idea of growing up and maturing.

Do you think it is important to have a material memory, such as a photo?

I believe so. I think that just for memories sake, I believe quite often we use mementos such as photographs to refer back to, as a trigger for memory. So to see that photo obviously brings back a lot of memories of the person I went to the ball with, what I was feeling at the time, the money that went into the ball and such as what we were wearing etc.

Have you noticed any new traditions?

We had limousines when I was younger. I think that the amount of money that is being spent is increasing and the amount of money the girls are willing to spend on their dresses is becoming somewhat excessive. Some girls are hiring dresses because they want a particular style that is beyond their price range.

Thank you.

Interview Six: Teacher F, Sam

Recorded at Comet Bay College on 14/03/2012

Why do you think we have a school ball?

I don't know why we have to have it, but I know as a year coordinator it is a good idea to have it just as a morale booster amongst the students and it builds a positive culture for them at the school to have an event like that. Especially in year 12 when they are about to leave. I think it is valuable for those reasons. It is a bit of a reward and also to just build a bit of positivity and positive culture. Otherwise I think year 12 could be pretty gloom and doom with exams and everything.

What do you think the school would like the students to learn through the school ball?

I don't think there is a whole lot for them to learn other than to respect for their peers. All the life lessons, more than anything. I don't think that they need it; I think they could have another event in place of the ball where they could also learn these lessons. It is things they learn at school every day like respecting each other. The only other thing that they could get out of it, they could do is a bit of money management because they seem to spend so much money on their ball gowns and limos and everything. They could benefit from doing a budget.

How does the current school ball compare to your own school ball?

Oh, it is very different. We didn't even have a school ball. It was called a graduation dinner and our parents attended. So we, students went and we had three tickets. Most people gave the two tickets to their parents, you had to bring your parents and you could give the other one to a boyfriend or girlfriend if you had one. There were speeches and sit down, and you had to behave because your parents were there and then you did get to have a bit of a dance. There was a DJ. At the end of the night after all the speeches you could stand up and have a bit of a dance. But that was it! It was nothing like now, I don't know anyone who spent hundreds on dresses, they may have, but it wasn't the done thing, like it is now. No-one got limos because you came with your parents. You just got a lift with your mum and dad. I'm from a country high school, but it was just at a local bowling club (laughs). It was nice, the venue was not an issue, it was just wherever it happened to be. The same with the meal, it was just whatever the teacher organised for us. A lot of the onus was on us, the students. If we wanted to have a graduation dinner our year coordinator put together

a graduation committee and they organised everything. They printed out invitations, the teacher organised the venue, but the kids did everything. The kids did the decorations, seating plan, they did everything. So it is very different to now whereas a teacher takes up so much time to organise it.

What do you think is the value of the leavers' jackets?

I can't think of any value of the top of my head. Again it is a bit of a reward more than anything. A positive reward. It is valuable for the whole school in the fact that it separates the year 12s from the rest of the school, so the younger students can identify them and look up to them. So long as they do the right thing. I mean if they are a bunch of naughty kids then then there is no point in them being singled out like that I suppose.

Do you still have your leavers' jacket?

Yeah, I do (laughs). I don't really like it but it is really good quality jumper. I can't bring myself to throw it away. No-one else has and when I see people from school they have all still got theirs.

Do you think your students will keep their leavers' jackets?

I think they will keep them for at least a few years because they are good quality jackets and it does hold a bit of sentimental value I do think. From that year and that time that they used to wear it. Whether they hang on to them for as long as I have, I don't know. I don't think their jackets are the quality they we had either. We only had one style; we didn't have all the choice like they have. Now they have the fleecy jackets and they are not going to last.

Will the mood at the graduation be different from the ball do you think?

Yes, I haven't done much organisation for the graduation yet, but when I do it will be nothing like the ball at all. I have heard other teachers say that the graduation is for the parents and the ball is for the students. I've never thought of it that way but I guess that is more of what the mood will be like. A lot more sombre for the graduation. And a bit more formal. More formal setting, but less formal dress.

Thank you.

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