

# Market imperative and popular culture



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Market Imperative and Popular culture What do we understand by the term popular culture Is the punk culture, the rap music thing or simply the mainstream culture The fact is that popular culture refers to the elements of culture which are prevalent in a society. That popular culture is the culture of the masses.

So how is it connected with market imperative And what really is market imperative Market imperative is basically an economic concept that states that the consistent need of producers to seek new markets forces them to cross national boundaries and exploit foreign markets. In other words, the need to seek new frontiers might push national boundaries to the extent that there is little difference left in national and foreign markets. When a country's producers push their own boundaries, they create new boundaries and thus embrace foreign land into their own scope of influence.

This is a logical concept but due to rapid globalization, this concept has become a curse for the world. America stands at the very center of this heated debate about national boundaries extension. If a country that seeks to extend its control to other countries chooses to market its products and services to foreign lands, it automatically gains access to their social and moral fabric. And while it may be trying to only sell its products but it intentionally or unintentionally also manages to sell its values and norms to other countries thus triggering a process of homogenous culture.

This homogenous culture means that the popular cultural values in the US are also adopted and accepted by people in other countries especially by the youth. Whether this is a positive force or not is out of the scope of our discussion. We only need to understand that the world is such today that no market can operate alone and no country can really exist in isolation.

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As producers seek new markets, more than just their products and services travel to foreign lands. This leads to a common popular culture. And this fact has been highlighted in an article by Benjamin Barber as he writes:

" Common markets demand a common language, as well as a common currency, and they produce common behaviors of the kind bred by cosmopolitan city life everywhere. Commercial pilots, computer programmers, international bankers, media specialists, oil riggers, entertainment celebrities, ecology experts, demographers, accountants, professors, athletes-these compose a new breed of men and women for whom religion, culture, and nationality can seem only marginal elements in a working identity."

People tend to give up other parts of their identity in order to create and adopt a more working identity. This is an excellent concept and one that explains how market imperative penetrates popular culture and takes it around the globe. Even some of the most isolationist countries have been so overwhelmed by the influence of market imperative that they have either entered new markets or opened their doors to foreign producers than making room for homogenous popular culture.

A very good example of this has been cited by Barber in the same article. He writes:

" America has dominated the world's popular culture for much longer, and much more decisively. In November of 1991 Switzerland's once insular culture boasted best-seller lists featuring Terminator 2 as the No. 1 movie, Scarlett as the No. 1 book, and Prince's Diamonds and Pearls as the No. 1 record album. No wonder the Japanese are buying Hollywood film studios even faster than Americans are buying Japanese television sets."

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In this way, intense desire to seek new markets push national boundaries and room is made for other markets to become part of the system. Once in the system, these markets adopt more than just the products. Societies get influenced as popular culture from one country penetrates another and thus gives birth to a common culture.

#### Reference

Benjamin Barber. Jihad vs. McWorld. The Atlantic March 1992