

Storytelling and Youth: An Emerging Force for Social Change

by Andre Heuer

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MINNEAPOLIS, Minn., USA -- I often hear the lament from some storytellers, "Where are the young people? Who will carry on the tradition?" I too have felt this concern. I am aware of the dedicated work of storytellers like Kevin Cordi, Elizabeth Rose, and Judy Sima, who work hard to involve youth in storytelling with programs such as the National Youth Storytelling Showcase. However, in spite of their significant work, I see few youth at the National Storytelling Network conference or many of the other storytelling events that I attend. Do we need to be concerned? Are there young people involved with storytelling? If so, where are they?

Well, recently I found out, and I am no longer concerned.

This summer I attended the Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed Conference (PTO) in North Carolina and the Midwest Social Forum (MWSF) in Wisconsin. I met many young people in their teens and twenties who are working with storytelling not only as performance art but as a tool for social change and transformation.

[SNIP – End of preview.]