

On Teaching

Making Globalization Ordinary: Teaching Globalization in the American Studies Classroom

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The publication in 1983 of Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* marked a turning point in the scholarship of the nation state and of national cultures. By daring to suggest that nations were "imagined political communities" emerging out of distinctly historical circumstances, Anderson challenged the status of the nation as a taken-for-granted category of analysis. His argument was well-received not because it was original, but because it crystallized an emerging consensus from within a variety of academic fields that the nation was not the only possible lens through which to examine culture, politics, economics, or history. As David Noble points out, the "aesthetic authority" of the nation—its capacity to organize thought and analysis—had to be actively sustained through practices of suppression, exclusion, and fabrication (Noble 2002, 273). By the 1940s, the work of defending the boundaries (real and symbolic) of the nation became increasingly difficult. World War II, the Cold War, and anti-colonial struggles made the global context of national life inescapable while the struggles of oppressed minorities within the nation for civil rights and social recognition exposed national coherence as fiction. Scholars in a variety of fields began to look beyond the paradigm of the nation for ways to understand political, economic, and social relations. They took up comparative international studies and focused on subnational circuits of culture; they began to excavate the histories of "peoples without history" (Wolf 1982) and to examine patterns of global similarity; they even sought to discover how nationalism became a

truly transnational phenomenon. Anderson's reconceptualization of the nation as a contingent phenomenon, crafted out of the nexus of colonial (i.e. global) relations and in response to the reality of human social diversity, spoke to these new conditions of intellectual engagement.

The challenge to the concept of the nation as the primary unit of social analysis has posed particular problems for the interdisciplinary field of American studies, which was founded on an exceptionalist mode of inquiry.¹ Early American studies scholars assumed the meaning of the term "America" was self-evident and sought to define the content of "American" uniqueness. They did not ask "what is America" or "what is culture;" they asked "what is American"—what political, economic, and cultural conditions defined the essence of the nation's difference (Denning 1986, 360). Latter-day American studies scholars, or New Americanists, have subjected this romance of the nation to intense scrutiny, illustrating how this consensus version of the national particular was produced through the suppression and exclusion of internal heterogeneity and external interconnection.² The field-imaginary of American studies has been redrawn by critical work on U.S. multiculturalisms and migrations, regional and hemispheric comparisons, and transnational studies of the "flows" of money, materials, ideas, images, and peoples. A cursory glance at the themes of the last ten American Studies Association (ASA) conferences documents this dramatic shift away from cultural nationalism and exceptionalism within the field. References to American "cultures" in the plural and to the connections between violence and belonging are complemented by a new orientation toward trans-hemispheric and transnational "crossings" and "migrations," all of which are designed to foreground the links between "local" identities and places and "global" power relations.³ Presidential addresses have worried over what it means to conduct a "transnational American studies" (Elliott 2007; Fishkin 2005; Kaplan 2004; Radway 1999; Sumida 2003), to attend to "borders" and "crossings" (Fishkin 2005; Limerick 1997; Sanchez 2002), and to place racial and ethnic multiplicity and dynamism at the heart of the American studies enterprise (Kelley 2000; Ruiz 2007; Sanchez 2002; Washington 1998).⁴ Janice Radway (1999) dared to suggest that the name "American studies" might be part of the problem, promoting a parochial emphasis on the nation state at a time when national sovereignty and agency were becoming less determinant of social relations. Stephen Sumida's 2002 address, "Where in the World is American Studies?" captured precisely the sense of confusion associated with these material and intellectual shifts.

This questioning of the field-imaginary of American studies responds, as I have argued, to shifting material conditions both within and beyond the nation state. New technologies of transportation and communication have increasingly knit the world together and drawn everyone into the market economy, albeit unevenly and with differential effects. These processes of economic globalization have destabilized familiar perceptions of identity, community, and locality, reconfiguring both personal and social relations in unpredictable ways. In keeping with the new, more critical orientation of the field, American studies programs

and departments around the country have taken up the challenge of addressing these developments in the undergraduate and graduate classrooms. Courses on “globalization” and “America’s role in the world” have become staples of American studies programs across the country from Texas to Michigan, Virginia to Kansas, Oklahoma to California. Indeed, several programs have made globalization the focal point of their entire programs (the universities of Miami, FL, and Hawai’i, for instance). Despite the proliferation of such courses, however, there is little practical information available about how to teach globalization at the undergraduate level and in an American studies context. For those of us who teach in the mid-American region, there is even less information about how to teach globalization to a politically conservative student body trained to think of capitalism as sacrosanct and difference as a threat, who have little experience with racial, ethnic, and national variation and who tend to view economic success or failure as a matter of individual effort. How do you teach about the destabilizing effects of globalization in areas where those effects *seem* distant and unrelated to daily life? Where global migrations increasingly affect local conditions, but in ways that are obscured by persistent patterns of ethnic, racial, and class privilege? Where politicians, economic leaders, and heritage industries all tout the timelessness of “local values” and encourage a willful blindness to the global penetration and reconfiguration of the local?

This essay offers one strategy for teaching globalization in such a context, using the internet as a means of figuring the interconnection of peoples and places in the contemporary era. In what follows, I provide an overview of an introductory course in American studies at Oklahoma State University, which was constructed with these shifting social and intellectual dynamics in mind (see Appendix C for a copy of the syllabus). The course culminated in a web-building project designed to trace the effects of globalization on the local landscapes of Oklahoma (see Appendix C for a copy of the assignment). The aim of this essay is to highlight the possibilities and pitfalls of using visual media, and especially the world-wide web, to teach about globalization. It offers a set of strategies and resources for teaching American studies in a “post-national” way and a description of actual course dynamics that can help instructors anticipate potential problems teaching a multicultural and global approach to American studies, particularly in a history or American studies survey course. Because I recognize that globalization “often makes itself felt most powerfully through the reorganization of spaces and the transformation of local experience” (Lipsitz 1994, 6), the essay focuses on classroom activities designed to contextualize, or re-locate, the economic underpinnings of globalization in the local, everyday activities of individuals. By grounding the global in the local and everyday, I tried to raise student awareness about the processes and effects of globalization and to give them a framework for understanding their lives in relation to, rather than apart from, others in the world.⁵

The Global Oklahoma Project: Defamiliarizing the Local/Locating the Global

Located in Stillwater, OK—seventy-five miles from the nearest city—Oklahoma State University presents an ideal test case for teaching globalization in an environment where its effects seem invisible. The student population at OSU is relatively homogenous, and student tolerance of diversity is notoriously suspect.⁶ Of the 23,000 students on the Stillwater campus, all but 5,000 hail from the state of Oklahoma itself; only 3,000 students self-identify as “minority” with Native Americans comprising two thirds of that total.⁷ While OSU has international students, they number only 1,600 and are mostly pursuing graduate degrees, which means undergraduates have limited interaction with them. My class was a microcosm of this larger whole, consisting of 45 freshmen and sophomores, most of whom hailed from Oklahoma and only 3 of whom identified as “minority” (one each African-American student, Latina student, and Native student). While we eventually cultivated five new American studies majors from this class, the students entered the course to fulfill general-education requirements, not to pursue a particular interest in the subject matter. Indeed, the majority of students identified as “Business Majors” (the most popular major on campus) and approached their education as vocational training. Many of the students had never really thought about capitalism, nationalism, or globalization as historical phenomena, and they tended to treat these social constructs as natural and inevitable ways of organizing the world. The first step in preparing for this project, then, was to contextualize these phenomena historically.

By organizing the class into case studies of “contact,” including units on colonization, slavery, labor strife, imperialism, and globalization, I sought to challenge their received notions of “America” as a coherent and “exceptional” nation with a singular culture. The goal was to get students to re-imagine the nation as an imagined community made up of complex “overlappings rather than [simple] boundaries” (Jehlen 1993, 55). I was particularly interested in giving students a sense of the dialectical nature of capitalism—its capacity for both good and evil and its status as a set of social relations negotiated by the individuals who live under its sway. By studying the history of capitalist development in the United States as a prelude to the discussion of globalization, students are better prepared to think critically about the advantages and disadvantages of the capitalist system *they* live within. After all, globalization is not a new phenomenon but the culmination of the modern phase of empire building, itself facilitated by technological revolution and economic integration (Held et al. 1999). The United States was founded upon such a project, and it has pursued a policy of territorial expansion for much of its history. Thus, the course begins with an examination of the European colonization and displacement of Native Americans, using comparative studies like Tzvetan Torodov’s *Conquest of America* and John Demos’ *Unredeemed Captive*. These texts complicate the notion that the United States was founded by white Protestants whose motives were unselfish

and whose territorial claims were uncontested. We then move to a discussion of how the economic development of the United States depended on the importation of black slave labor from Africa and the Caribbean. The goal of both units is to illustrate how the nation developed in relation to, rather than apart from, the Old Worlds of Europe and Africa. Primary texts, such as Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, help to ground the economic critique by showing how global economic relations impact ordinary individuals and shape social relations.

The course then turns to the period of rapid industrialization and incorporation in the late nineteenth century to illustrate how internal economic development led to a formal policy of imperial adventurism. By the 1870s, the rapid development of the national economy had engendered a "crisis of overproduction" that encouraged both industrial consolidation and imperial expansion. Robber Barons like Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller saw hard times as an opportunity to exert their hold over particular industries and monopolize production and distribution. They employed mechanization and scientific management to enhance productivity while trimming the costs associated with production, including the cost of labor, and they used ruthless tactics to undercut and eventually absorb smaller, independent companies. Once their corporations were firmly established, they tied their economic destiny to the nation-state, arguing that overseas expansion was essential to the nation's health (Rosenberg 1982). And so, beginning in the 1890s, U.S. industry extended itself across the globe with the blessing, and often the military support, of the state.

Students are familiar with figures like Carnegie and Rockefeller primarily as cultural heroes. They have been taught that these men embody the individualism and gumption characteristic of American identity. Rarely have they encountered the histories of labor organization or anti-imperialism that would counter such perceptions. I use primary and secondary source materials to introduce these alternative histories to the students with the aim of getting them to recognize the negotiations involved in the consolidation of capitalism in the 1890s. For example, PBS's excellent documentary on Andrew Carnegie, *The Richest Man in the World* (1997), contains vivid descriptions of his cost-cutting methods. When students hear how he sped up production by pitting work crews in his steel mills against one another, promising to fire the crew who produced the least, they begin to get a sense of how capitalism may negatively impact the individuals who labor within its domain. We study the bloody strike at Carnegie's Homestead Steel Mill in 1892 and the bloodier Ludlow Massacre at one of Rockefeller's subsidiaries, the Colorado Fuel and Iron Co., in 1914 to illustrate how capitalism is shaped by social struggle between individuals who hold different understandings of capitalism and how it ought to work.⁸ We also examine the representation of these and other strikes in Frank Leslie's *Illustrated Papers* to show how public perceptions of both labor and capital have changed over time. The unit culminates in a discussion of the rise of Populism, which sought to renegotiate the rules of the capitalist game (though not necessarily to end the game itself). A short story like Jack Conroy's "Uncle Ollie's Spite Fence" (1985) clearly illustrates the

competing versions of capitalism in play, as Uncle Ollie and his bitter enemy, Luther Shackleford, band together in the name of yeoman capitalism against the monopoly capitalism represented by a new supermarket chain and its fat cat lawyer. The primary objective of this unit is to disabuse students of the notion that capitalism is or can be defined in only one way. Instead, they see how both the meaning and the shape of capitalism have changed over time. They come to realize that capitalism is not a static system of abstract rules but a lived system whose rules are subject to contestation and renegotiation.

With this historical base established, it is possible to approach the current phase of globalization without raising a knee-jerk defense of capitalism. A more thoughtful discussion of the changes entailed by contemporary processes of globalization and the effects of these on individual lives becomes possible because a dialectical approach has been in force throughout the course. The key to generating debate about the impact of globalization is to make the otherwise abstract economic processes that drive it appear concrete to the students. As Kevin Robins has stated, “globalization is ordinary” (1997, 12). It is not some mystical, otherworldly force whose impact is felt only occasionally and under duress. It is, rather, something we encounter on a daily basis. It determines the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the cars we drive, and how much we pay for all of these. It conditions how and where we live, with whom we communicate and under what terms. It even helps us define an identity for ourselves through the processes of differentiation and assimilation facilitated by increased contact with a world of others. As George Lipsitz puts it, “From popular culture to politics, from the adoption market to the drug trade, new technologies and trade patterns connect places as well as people, redefining local identities and identifications in the process” (1994, 6). The goal of any classroom study of globalization should be to bring the vocabulary of globalization to life by reminding students of their connection to these processes.

One way to accomplish this goal is with discussion modules or group exercises geared toward eliciting recognition of the local impacts of global relations. As John Tomlinson argues, “the paradigmatic experience of global modernity for most people . . . is that of staying in one place but experiencing the ‘dis-placement’ that global modernity brings to them” (1999, 150). As cultural geographer David Harvey (1990) suggests, the supermarket is a useful tool for tracking the influence of the global on the local in this way. Begin by having students free-write about the constitution of the supermarket. What does the supermarket contain? Where do most of the foods originate? How are the foods organized? Etc. Then, assign students in pairs to travel to the local supermarket and test their assumptions by attending to details that most of us ignore most of the time while shopping. What do the labels and trademarks tell us about the origin of the food stuffs? How much of the food available is actually generated from within the United States, and how much derives from elsewhere? Have the student-groups write up a brief analysis that compares their findings with their original perceptions (I do this in the course’s on-line chat forum). In class, discuss the findings. Students are

generally surprised to discover that the impact of globalization is not confined to the introduction of “ethnic food” aisles but pervades the supermarket’s offerings from produce to packaged goods, like cereal, chips, and meat.⁹ A second phase of this exercise might be to have students re-evaluate their findings to determine *why* this degree of globalization never registered in their consciousnesses before. How is the supermarket laid out to encourage a particular perception of the food as locally produced? How do marketing strategies, like trademarks and brand names, help obscure the global relations of production involved in the creation of their favorite foodstuffs?¹⁰ How do our prior perceptions about the world and our place in it obscure these details from view? Ideally, this evaluative phase of discussion ought to help students recognize the constructed nature of their local environments, including the ideologies that help make their daily interactions with the capitalist system seem unremarkable. Once they start to think about the environment as socially-constructed, they are ready to become more skeptical about the information they receive from environmental cues.¹¹

The text that I find most useful for teaching about globalization in a mid-sized lecture course of American studies undergraduates is Walter LaFeber’s *Michael Jordan and the New Global Capitalism* (2002). Using familiar cultural references, LaFeber introduces students to the vocabulary and mechanics of an otherwise abstract economic system. The text is accessible, interdisciplinary in approach, and historical in sensibility; it situates contemporary processes of globalization in a social history of struggle and offers a much-needed corrective to celebratory accounts of these processes as natural, inevitable, or uncontrollable.¹² LaFeber enumerates five key differences between late-nineteenth century industrial expansion and today’s dynamics of globalization: transnational corporations deal in “soft goods” like ideas, images, and services, use primarily foreign labor, profit primarily from foreign markets, target their marketing strategies to a global audience, and evade national attempts to regulate their practices by dispersing operations widely. He then uses multinational corporations, like Nike, the National Basketball Association (NBA), Time-Warner and Rupert Murdoch’s News Corporation, to illustrate these differences. He describes Michael Jordan as both a gifted athlete and a global marketing icon whose value is determined by his ability to remain effectively empty of content, a human version of the Nike “swoosh.” By examining Jordan’s relationship to Nike and the NBA, LaFeber introduces students to the major tensions around which arguments about globalization revolve, including labor relations (Nike’s use of subcontractors and sweatshop labor), the growth of economic inequality between both persons and nation-states, and the question of “cultural imperialism.” I supplement the text with video clips about labor relations under global capitalism, including segments of ESPN’s documentary program *Outside the Lines*, which produced an exposé on overseas shoe production in 1998. Other good documentaries on labor practices and responses include *Global Village or Global Pillage* (Brechner, Costello, and Smith 1999) and *Globalization: Winners and Losers* (2000), which provide good introductions to the key terms, *From the Mountains to the*

Maquiladoras (1991) and *NAFTA and the New Economic Frontier: Life Along the U.S./Mexico Border* (2001), which consider the impact of NAFTA on workers and communities throughout North America, and *The Global Assembly Line* (Gray 1986), which studies the increased economic disparity between nations within the global system of capitalism.

To highlight the importance of marketing to economic globalization, I use clips from the Warner's Bros. film *Space Jam* (Pytko 1996), which starred Michael Jordan and the Looney Tunes cast and effectively *promoted* commercialization by *critiquing* it. We discuss the film's mode of "complicitous critique" (Hutchison 1989, 15) in relation to global marketing strategies, which seek to by-pass language barriers by eliminating language from the equation (the "swoosh" speaks "Just Do It" so that Nike's commercials don't have to; Jordan speaks "transcendence" so that Gatorade doesn't have to). We also discuss the film's global distribution and consider why it was so successful in terms of its aesthetics, its status as an American production, and, most importantly, the values it seems to project and to associate specifically with America (via Jordan). Finally, we discuss how the popularity of the film complicates assertions that American culture is colonizing the world, that globalization is really a form of U.S. cultural imperialism.¹³ If individuals *choose* to watch this film, does this constitute a form of domination or imposition? Does the fact that U.S.-based multinationals control the flow of cultural products around the world change the answer to that question? Again, the object of such an exercise is to get students to recognize the "ordinariness" of the processes of globalization by using pedagogical instruments with which they themselves are familiar.

New technologies of communication have been crucial to the development of this new, more accelerated and expansive version of capitalist integration. As Thomas Friedman (2000) notes, new technologies have "democratized" the distribution of information enabling more people to enter the capitalist game while requiring that they play by the rules because of the more intense media scrutiny (67). They have also made significant contributions to the democratization of techniques of cultural imagination and production. Even as these technologies weaken some of the old barriers that distinguished the haves from the have-nots, however, the lack of universal access to technology, or any public initiative to generate such access, erects new barriers to social mobility. I try to help students understand these conditions by involving them in the practice of online knowledge production. The culminating exercise for this sequence of units is the production of a website devoted to making globalization recognizably "ordinary" by tracing the connections between students' local context and the global market system.

Web production possesses a number of advantages over traditional methods of assessment like the linear research essay.¹⁴ For example, it increases student awareness of the audience for their writing. Research essays are generally perceived by students as communiqués to their professors. They assume that the goal of such an assignment is to demonstrate their comprehension of course *content*, rather than their analytical or persuasive *skills*. Even when actively

encouraged to imagine a broader audience, through explicit instructions or peer-review exercises, students seem to direct their efforts narrowly toward the professor's expectations (peer reviewers also seem to direct their comments to the professor's expectations). The traditional research essay thus does a fairly good job of assessing student recall and basic comprehension, but it does not necessarily do a good job of assessing higher-order functions of synthesis and application, including rhetorical strategy. A web project, on the other hand, because it will become a part of the public domain of the world-wide web, necessitates a more expansive conception of the audience. It alters the stakes of production and encourages students to imagine themselves joining an extant public debate about issues they are researching. The reconceptualization of the audience for academic work, thus, reinforces class lessons about the capitalist system's essentially social nature.

I prepare students to understand their web pages in these terms by utilizing on-line, asynchronous chat forums throughout the semester in which I ask students to critique or defend course materials, extend or challenge each other's postings, and generally think about the implications of our class discussions. I also compile a list of web resources related to globalization, which I post on the course Blackboard website. Preparatory to the web projects, students are asked to annotate and assess the utility of one of these resources for the class. Their annotations are then added to the list, and students can use the links as guides for further research. By having students explore primary- and secondary-sources on the web, I familiarize them with the environment, teach them to assess the validity and utility of online source materials, and train them to think of their own work as part of an on-going, collaborative knowledge project. Randy Bass (2000b) calls such exercises an essential component of on-line pedagogy because they train students for inquiry-based learning and collaboration. Such exercises "make knowledge visible" (Collins, Brown, and Holum 1991) to students and encourage a shift in emphasis from "knowledge as product to knowledge as process" (Bass 2000c). Students learn to take more control over their own education and begin to see how knowledge emerges through collaboration and accretion, i.e. how learning is "distributive," non-linear, and plural by definition (Bass 2000c).

The other major benefit of web projects is that they enable students to be more expansive in their presentation of knowledge. In addition to a semi-linear synthesis of their independent research, they can incorporate horizontal linkages to alternate sites of information. Because they can direct readers to sites where differing opinions are found, they are more likely to take note of these differences and accommodate the information in their own analyses. While I did not build such a component into my assignment sheet for this project, I will in the future, for I think it further reinforces lessons about the distributed nature of cognition (Bass 2000b). This can be as simple as requiring students to create a separate page containing annotated links to five websites related to their topic, or you can make the requirement more difficult and have them use internal links (links embedded in the text of the analysis) to three to five external sources. By

asking them to embed the links, you are asking them to think more concretely about *how* these sites relate to their own arguments. More radically still, there are now an abundance of on-line collaborative knowledge-building sites that use the open-source “wiki” model to encourage distributed knowledge production, collaborative learning and complexity.¹⁵

Students can also incorporate different types of evidentiary material into a website, “widening the definition of what counts [as] . . . viable evidence of cultural meaning” (Bass 2000c). For example, one of my student groups working on the historical development of the telephone in Oklahoma incorporated an early advertisement for the phone and analyzed its content to illustrate how the technology was imagined, even early on, in terms of the collapse of spatial barriers. The idea to use a primary text, like an ad, came naturally to the students while working in this graphic medium, but it usually has to be prompted when the assignment is a linear essay. Students can also incorporate video and sound into their web pages and select different color schemes, font faces, and font sizes to contribute to the formation and organization of meaning. In linear, print formats, the font size and style are often dictated by the professor to ensure legibility. Working in a web medium, the students not only get to present information in a variety of ways, but also are encouraged to think about how issues of style also convey information. In my course, this reinforces the interpretive skills emphasized in lecture and discussion. I push students to consider not only the content of the historical texts they read, see, and hear but also the style of narration or composition and what these reveal about the historical context. For example, when students read John Rockefeller’s testimony before a congressional committee investigating Standard Oil’s monopoly practices, we discuss both what he says and how he says it. His tone is extremely condescending, and the students easily see this as evidence of the then common sense perception that government has no business messing with business. When asked why Rockefeller reacts so vehemently to questions about his operations, they intuit that he feels betrayed by the government inquiry. Students surmise that the cause of his anger is a breakdown in traditional business-state relations. Thus, Rockefeller’s *tone* teaches them about the transition from the Gilded Age to the Progressive Era. I view the web-building exercise as the culmination of this interpretive training. It offers students a chance to see how their own rhetorical and stylistic choices impact the transfer of information for better or worse. In sum, web-building projects enable the professor to combine theory and practice in a way that traditional formats do not.¹⁶

The Global Oklahoma Project

Given my course emphasis on the dynamic qualities of history, culture, and capitalism, I tried to design a web project that would encourage students to recognize the “ordinariness” of the processes of globalization. The central question was: how do global relations impact the local context of Oklahoma? Students were

told to identify and study one *tangible* way the processes of globalization touched their lives in Oklahoma. The hope was that students would begin to recognize how they are engaged by globalization even when they fail to engage it as an issue of relevance. Because this project was the culmination of an American studies emphasis on contact between social groups and its impact on the formation of identity, they were also directed to analyze the impact of global interconnection on the conception of Oklahoman and/or American identity. How does globalization force Oklahomans/Americans to reconsider their sense of themselves as a people? I felt this component of the discussion was particularly important in the immediate post-9/11 context, for it offered a way of complicating the Manichean, “us-them” mentality then-framing public debates about the War on Terrorism. I wanted students to really consider what it means to describe national identity as a social and historical construct so that they might be prepared to apply those lessons to the political context beyond the classroom. I hoped the exercise would enable them to think more critically about the rhetorical function of buzzwords like “America” and “The American People,” which were being flung about very nonchalantly at the time to justify a rush to war. I wanted them to remember our course lessons and ask themselves: If there is no clear “us,” how can there be a clear “them” against whom to oppose ourselves and our way of doing things? If we “Americans” are not united about issues of politics, economics, or religion, how can we base policy on the presumption that other communities are? More radically, if the globe is now so interconnected that a few men with box cutters can strike at the heart of the world’s only superpower, are the current arrangements of political and economic power really the optimal arrangements? How might we start to rethink these relations? In short, by invoking the lessons of identity and embedding them in a “realistic and relevant context” (Honebein 1996, 11), I hoped to encourage students to transfer their critical thinking skills beyond the classroom setting.

My assignment sheet spelled out what I thought were manageable goals: create one web page that contained at least 1000 words of text and was supported by at least three sources of evidence and analysis. All student groups exceeded this minimal expectation, creating multiple pages with hyperlinks between them and to additional sources on the web. Because many students have a difficult time with open-ended assignments, I also offered a list of suggestions for possible topics and approaches. I hoped that these suggestions would clarify what I meant by “tangible” and “concrete” connections between the global and the local. By concocting rhetorical “think-questions” for each topic, I tried to help students better understand my expectations. Few students groups adopted one of the listed *topics*, but almost all of them utilized a version of the suggested *approaches* to organize their analysis, which indicates that they found such questions helpful. Finally, to facilitate student success, I set aside several class days for technical instruction, group work, and peer review activities, including both self-evaluation and peer-review activities that utilized the stated criteria for assessment. In this

way, students were forced to read the criteria carefully and apply them to their own work before I applied them to determine a project grade.

Assessing the Outcomes

My goals for this project were obviously lofty. The results were solid but not spectacular (Student pages can be viewed at <http://englishcourses.okstate.edu/takacs/2103Projects/>). I received web pages on a variety of topics from the impact of transportation and communication on globalization (telephones, airlines, and waterways) to the importance of education in the global economy, the impact of NAFTA on U.S. workers, and the activities of specific multinational corporations operating in Oklahoma (Halliburton Oil, Wal-Mart, and General Motors). Given the number of business majors in the class, analyses tended to revolve around the economic motives and consequences of globalization and to slight the social and cultural impacts. They also seemed intent on recovering the value of economic innovation and entrepreneurship to social development, which implies that my approach to capitalism was geared perhaps a bit too much toward countering the dominant neoliberal rhetoric. The website on “Nineteenth Century Industrialism,” for instance, sought to recover the “forgotten heroism” of businessmen like Carnegie and Rockefeller. It included a lengthy quotation from the Ayn Rand Institute’s Onkar Ghate (2002) celebrating business initiative as the engine of human progress. While these students acknowledged that there was often “vast corruption in business management, politics, and workers unions,” they did not address such phenomena in any depth. They created a separate page devoted to critiques of capitalist modernity, for example, but they tellingly labeled it “The Opposition.” The content of the page mentioned basic critiques of global capitalism but rarely devoted more than one line to these criticisms and failed to respond to them in any coherent way. I would have liked to have seen these students draw connections between the course materials and the other ideas about globalization they discovered through their research. A more in-depth engagement with the materials—one that treated them as parts of an unfinished conversation—might have resulted in a project devoted to thinking through globalization, rather than defending a singular position on it (see the page devoted to “NAFTA,” for an example of a more dialogical approach).

Other websites demonstrated a similar tendency to treat the assignment as an “argumentation” paper, rather than an opportunity for analysis. The site devoted to analyzing the 9/11 attacks in the context of globalization, for instance, took LaFeber to task (in straw-man form) for some of his assertions regarding Al Qaeda’s antipathy to modernized technologies. The authors unselfconsciously celebrated “America’s lead over the globe” in economic matters and sought to promote an exceptionalist vision of the United States’ role in the world. Obviously, this was a disappointing outcome from the perspective of course themes; from the perspective of critical pedagogy, however, there were some modest gains to be observed. Students clearly felt free to criticize my approach to globalization

and to offer alternative perspectives; they also felt at least nominally compelled to account for others' perspectives in their projects. That they did not think they needed to win my approval by regurgitating class lectures or discussions indicates that my classroom management style promoted semi-open inquiry and student "ownership" of knowledge. It just did not go far enough. The whole "ownership" metaphor implies a model of knowledge as a static possession, exchanged or transferred like any other commodity, and thus works against a truly dynamic conception of knowledge as process. The balance between course structure and open-ended inquiry in my course was still skewed in favor of content-delivery; analytical skill-building and a truly collaborative form of knowledge creation were sacrificed, as a result (Bass 2003; Linkon 2003; Huehner 2008).

The reflexive defense of capitalism and Americanism that recurred in these projects (following our much more complex and dynamic in-class discussions) is more than just a demonstration of the recalcitrance of "common sense;" it is also an indictment of my approach to the project. By concentrating too much on content provision—even up to the last day of class—I sacrificed the time necessary for analytical development. Web projects of this sort are, as I have argued, a perfect opportunity to engage students in critical thinking and distributed learning. To capitalize on this potential, though, you have to structure class time differently, de-emphasizing content provision in favor of student-centered learning and the development of insight. I think the results of the "Global Oklahoma" project might have been more satisfying if I had "slow[ed] down the learning process" (Bass 2000b) and devoted more time to the staged-development of student ideas, analysis, and research. Both Randy Bass (2003) and Sherry Linkon (2001) have argued that complex, critical thinking develops in an "incremental," "scaffolded" or "staged" manner that must be promoted through the careful design of learning projects. If the goal is to "[get] students to shift their focus from reaching conclusions to asking good questions" about course materials (Linkon 2003), then assignments must encourage students to re-read and re-visit course content constantly and to promote increasing complexity with each encounter. While I thought I was doing that, my assignments did not build off of one another in direct ways; I scaffolded learning-tasks, but not within the same unit or using the same course materials. This did not give students a chance to explore course texts in different ways or from different angles; it did not give them a chance to move beyond the "novice" stage of interpretation, except in the aggregate (Bass 2003). The logic of knowledge development within my Introduction to American Studies course as a whole was insufficiently transparent and reflective (Bass 2000b). This was due, in large part, to my failure to slow the learning process down.

If the results of the "Global Oklahoma" project were unspectacular, I hope the discussion of its genesis and outcomes will contribute to the scholarship of teaching and learning in American studies by offering food for thought. Education scholar Lee Schulman argues that "experience is what you get when what you expected doesn't happen" (quoted in Bass 2000a), and I hope that by

sharing my own experience of thwarted expectations, others can benefit. I have personally gone on to explore other initiatives in electronic pedagogy, including additional web projects in popular culture (<http://englishcourses.okstate.edu/takacs/3423Projects/index.html>) and a “wiki” project designed to promote the collaborative development of knowledge about American studies theories, methods, and topics (<http://americanwiki.pbwiki.com>). I remain convinced that electronic pedagogy and digital learning are important components of the twenty-first-century classroom, and, more importantly, that the style of learning—what Bass (2000c) calls “distributive epistemology”—complements shifts in the conception of the field-imaginary of American studies. If the new scholarship in American studies centers on collaborative and comparative studies of a pluralized and decentered “America,” then electronic pedagogy can promote a model of learning as process and exchange that expresses these scholarly developments. If ideas of closure and univocality in the humanities and social sciences are being challenged by scholarship on what Michel Foucault (1980) calls “subjugated knowledges,” then the open-ended, public, and collaborative nature of the web corresponds and promotes these developments. And, if conceptions of place and identity are being newly imagined in terms of flux, rather than stasis, then the web makes these processes of perpetual motion visible in a way that the much slower, more leisurely print culture simply cannot.¹⁸ The internet is both an engine of globalization, promoting the circulation of ideas, images, goods, services, and money, and an embodiment of the decentralizing tendencies and effects of these processes. It provides a palpable experience of flux and displacement at the same time that it promotes new forms of community and new opportunities for identity construction. For these reasons, the incorporation of digital technologies into the twenty-first-century classroom is almost inevitable. The pressing question becomes how to incorporate these technologies in ways that promote complex critical-thinking and equip our students to navigate, participate in, and shape an increasingly distributed public life. I hope my reflections on the “Global Oklahoma” project might prove useful to others engaged in the endeavor of defining these best-practices.

Appendix A: Getting Started with Digital Media in the Classroom

Here are some basic instructions about how to get started with web-based pedagogy for those who may be new to the field.

1. **Assess what technologies and assistance your institution provides.** Check to see whether your institution has an instructional technology consultant and make an appointment with this person to discuss your ideas. Tell them what you want to do, and they will tell you whether and how much of the plan is feasible for your class and your institutional context. Most consultants will provide lab space, a training session (or two), and instructional support for your students. They may even acquire special hardware and software if you can prove need.
2. **Assess your students' initial level of skill and familiarity with the web and web-building.** Most students will know how to navigate the web and use a word processing program like Microsoft Word; a few will be familiar with social networking tools like "facebook" and "myspace" and so will have rudimentary web-building experience, and a few will be expert web-builders and media producers. The number of skilled students you have will largely determine how you design the requirements of the assignment.
3. **If possible design group assignments and pair skilled students with the less-skilled.** This will not only alleviate student anxiety about the technical requirements of the project, it will allow them to teach each other.
4. **Use Web 2.0 technologies like "blogging" and "wiki-building" to encourage innovation and collaborative learning.** "Blogs" are similar to writing journals and can be used to facilitate drafting and peer review. "Wikis" (like wikipedia) are websites built collaboratively using WYSIWIG (what-you-see-is-what-you-get) software that looks and feels like a word-processing program. Students will probably be more familiar with these sorts of technologies than with traditional web-building programs like Dreamweaver or Frontpage. They are also readily available and free for educational purposes. Best of all, they allow students to comment on and add to each other's sites in a truly collaborative fashion. Good blog sites for educational purposes include: Edublogs and Blogger.com. Good wiki sites for educational purposes include: pbwiki.com, wiki.com, wikia.com, and wetpaint.com.
5. **Whatever tool you choose, provide clear criteria for assessment.** List how many pages you want, how many links, how many images, sound clips or movies, how much collaboration, etc. Give guidance on issues of style and insist on readability. Most importantly, emphasize the intellectual goals and requirements of the assignment (it should have

a thesis, it should contain concrete evidence, all evidence, including multimedia components, should be explained, each element of the site should contribute to the accumulation of knowledge, etc.). Tell students: design counts but only insofar as it helps or hinders the communication of knowledge.

Additional Information on Using Web Technologies in the Classroom

- Carlson, Gigi. 2004. *Digital Media in the Classroom*. Burlington, MA: CMP Books.
- Cummings, Robert. 2008. *Wiki Writing: Collaborative Learning in the College Classroom*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Green, Timothy D. and Abbie H. Brown. 2002. *Multimedia Projects in the Classroom: A Guide to Development and Evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Richardson, Will. 2006. *Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, and Other Powerful Web Tools for Classrooms*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Warlick, David. 2007. *Classroom Blogging: A Teacher's Guide to Blogs, Wikis, and Other Tools That Are Shaping a New Information Landscape*. 2nd ed. http://www.lulu.com/product/paperback/classroom-blogging-2nd-edition/1372453?productTrackingContext=center_search_results.

Additional Information on Digital Media Use in the American Studies Classroom:

- McClymer, John. 2005. *The AHA Guide to Teaching and Learning with New Media*. Baltimore, MD: American Historical Association.
- “Teaching and Learning in the Digital Age.” *American Historical Association*. 2008. <http://www.historians.org/tl/>.
- “Visible Knowledge Project.” *American Studies Association*. January 10, 2009. <http://crossroads.georgetown.edu/vkp/index.htm>.

Appendix B: Resources on the Web about Globalization

Web Projects or Syllabi on Globalization:

- Global Oklahoma (Oklahoma State University)
<http://englishcourses.okstate.edu/takacs/2103Projects/index.html>
- Globalization 101 (Newport High School, RI)
<http://www.globalization101.org/>
- Globalization Website (Emory University)
<http://www.emory.edu/SOC/globalization/>
- Globalization and Development (University of Colorado, Colorado Springs)
<http://www.uccs.edu/~grateful/warner/soc438/webprojects.html>
- Globalization and Global Governance (University of Arizona)
<http://www.u.arizona.edu/ic/dixonw/103/103syl.phtml>
- Globalization and Social Interaction (University of British Columbia)
<http://www.arts.ubc.ca/fdatons/schaller/fdnssyll.html>
- Globalization and History (Harvard University)
<http://icg.harvard.edu/~ec2332/syllabus/Syllabus.pdf>
- Global Representations; Representations of the Global (Binghamton University)
<http://fbc.binghamton.edu/syllabus.htm>
- World Cultures (Baylor University)
<http://www.baylor.edu/~BIC/WCISyllabus2000.html>
- Globalization Seminar (Oklahoma University)
<http://faculty-staff.ou.edu/C/Robert.H.Cox1/4013.Globalization.2001.Syllabus.htm>
- Politics of Globalization (Reed College)
<http://web.reed.edu/academic/departments/pol/courses/PS340.global-ztn.htm>
- Globalization and European Public Policy (George Mason University)
<http://www.gmu.edu/departments/t-icp/course/syllabi/01sp/701-011.htm>
- The Politics of Globalization (University of Delaware)
<http://udel.edu/~carcher/syl-glob.html>
- Globalization and International Development (Trinity University)
http://www.trinity.edu/dspener/global_free/global_welcome.htm
- International Human Rights (Columbia University)
http://www.columbia.edu/itc/sipa/U6142/index.html?client_edit/course_syllabus.html
- Globalization and Government (Georgetown University)
<http://www.georgetown.edu/users/rueschm/>

General Information on Globalization:

- UNESCO, "Culture, Trade and Globalisation"
http://www.unesco.org/culture/industries/trade/html_eng/biblio.shtml
- World Trade Organization
<http://www.wto.org/>
- The World Bank
<http://www.imf.org/>

- The Organization of American States
<http://www.oas.org/>
- NAFTA (Copy of the Agreement)
<http://www.zapatistas.org/>
- The Free Trade Area of the Americas
<http://www.ftaa-alca.org/>
- Human Rights Watch
<http://www.imf.org/>
- PBS, “Globalization and Human Rights”
<http://www.pbs.org/globalization/>
- Global Village or Global Pillage Website
<http://www.villageorpillage.org/index.htm>
- John Ryan Sightline Project
<http://www.sightline.org/publications/books/stuff/stuff>
- American Friends Service Committee
<http://www.afsc.org/trade/default.htm>
- Public Citizen’s Global Trade Watch
<http://www.tradewatch.org/>
- Corporate Watch
<http://www.corpwatch.org/>
- Women on the Border
<http://www.womenontheborder.org>
- Zapatista Network
<http://www.zapatistas.org/>

Information on Sweatshops:

- Radical Teacher: Article about Teaching about Sweatshops
http://www.findarticles.com/cf_dls/m0JVP/2001_Summer/90530874/p3/article.jhtml
- Smithsonian Exhibit on the History of Sweatshop Labor in the U.S.
<http://americanhistory.si.edu/sweatshops/>
- Nike’s Response to Allegations of Labor Abuse
<http://www.nike.com/nikebiz/nikebiz.jhtml?page=25>
- Global Exchange Anti-Sweatshop Campaign
<http://www.globalexchange.org/>
- UNITE! Anti-Sweatshop Campaign
<http://www.uniteunion.org/sweatshops/whatis/whatis.html>
- Behind the Label
<http://www.behindthelabel.org/>
- PBS: Independent Lens, *T-Shirt Travels* website
<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/tshirttravels/film.html>
- Sweatshop Watch
<http://www.sweatshopwatch.org/>

Appendix C: Sample Syllabus

AMST2103: Introduction to American Studies
Oklahoma State University
Fall 2003

This interdisciplinary course focuses on the relationship between history and culture, specifically U.S. history and the ways in which we narrate that history to ourselves. We will examine four time periods in the history of U.S. development: 1) the colonial era (17th century); 2) the Age of Slavery; 3) the Gilded Age and Progressive Era late 19th-early 20th century); and 4) the age of globalization (the late 20th century). In each case, we will examine the ways that people have employed stories about the meaning of America in order to gain, maintain, or redistribute power and resources. For example, we will trace the history of the concept of “rugged individualism” in order to learn how this concept, which has been held up as an unchanging and timeless expression of what makes us American, is in fact variable. We will ask how people have used individualism to justify their use of the land and its resources. We will also consider how the concept holds up in the contemporary context, which is characterized by global integration and interconnection. Is rugged individualism a viable concept in a complex, interconnected world? Is it a viable concept in a world where identity is increasingly defined through consumer choice?

Required Texts

John Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive: A Family Story From Early America*

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

Walter LaFeber, *Michael Jordan and the New Global Capitalism*

Electronic reserve readings available in the “Course Materials” folder of Blackboard

Course Requirements

On-Line Comprehension Exercises: You will be asked to post a brief response to the reading materials on the virtual discussion board at least fifteen times during the semester. The assignments will be posted in the “Discussion Board” section of the Blackboard (<http://blackboard.okstate.edu>). Each assignment will be worth ten points, and together they will comprise 15% of your course grade. There will be no late postings accepted.

Exams (2 Mid-Terms, 1 Final): Exams will consist of identifications, short-answer responses, and/or essay questions and will cover the course readings, lectures, and discussions in equal measure. Check the course schedule to determine exam dates. There will always be a study guide offered for the exams; it behooves you to use it.

Web Project: I will provide a handout explaining the assignment as it nears, but basically, it will require you to explore a connection between your personal world and the global economy. You will be paired with a partner for this assignment and the two of you will be responsible for selecting a topic that falls within the parameters of the assignment. What you will produce is a website that displays your research into the chosen topic in a multimedia format. We will dedicate time in-class to the development of this project, including several skill workshops that will help you learn how to build a web page.

Schedule of Readings

*Readings marked with an asterisk are available electronically in the “Course Materials” folder on the Blackboard website. Readings with active hyperlinks can be accessed by clicking on the hyperlink.

Unit 1: Colonial America: Origins, Myths, Contact

- T 8/19 **Introduction: What is American Studies?**
- R 8/21 **Contact Narratives: The White Man Discovers America but not Americans**
Read: *Tzvetan Todorov, “Columbus and the Indians”
- T 8/26 **Read:** Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive* “Beginnings;” *”Iroquois Creation Myth”
- R 8/28 **Read:** Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive* Chaps. 1-2
- T 9/2 **Puritan Beliefs**
Read: J. Winthrop “Modell of Christian Charity” <http://history.hanover.edu/texts/winthmod.html>
- R 9/4 **Read:** Mary Rowlandson “The Captivity of Mary Rowlandson” <http://www.hannahdustin.com/maryrolandson.htm>
- T 9/9 **Read:** Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive* Chaps 3-4
- R 9/11 **Iroquois Beliefs**
Read: Donald Grinde and Bruce Johansen, “Perceptions of Am’s Native Democracies” http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/6Nations/EoL/chp2.html
Iroquois folk tales available on-line through the following links:
“Dekanawida and Hiawatha” <http://www.indians.org/welker/hiawatha.htm>
“Origins of the Iroquois Nations” <http://www.indians.org/welker/iroqnati.htm>
“Iroquois Constitution” <http://www.indians.org/welker/iroqcon.htm>
- T 9/16 **Read:** Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive* Chaps 6-7
- R 9/18 **Read:** Demos, *The Unredeemed Captive* “Endings” and “Epilogue”
- T 9/23 **Midterm I**

Unit 2: Slavery in Nineteenth Century America

R 9/25 **Conditions of Slavery**

- Read:** *Fanny Kemble Describes Plantation Slavery
*Roswell King Describes Plantation Slavery
*Daniel Hundley on The Southern Yeoman Farmer
*Frederick Douglass Describes Slavery
*Uncle Ben Describes Slavery

T 9/30 **No Class: Fall Break**

- R 10/2 **Read:** *Deborah Gray White, “The Nature of Female Slavery “
T 10/7 **Read:** Jacobson, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* Chaps. I-XI
R 10/9 **Read:** Jacobson, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* Chaps. XII-XXI
*Nat Turner’s “Confession”
T 10/14 **Read:** Jacobson, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* Chaps. XXII-Appendix

R 10/16 **Reconstruction and Jim Crow**

- Read:** *Louisiana Black Codes (1865)
*President Andrew Johnson Opposes Black Suffrage (1867)
*Slaves Respond to Emancipation (1866)
*The Ku Klux Klan During Reconstruction (1872)
*Florida Jim Crow Laws (1885-1913)

Unit 3: The Gilded Age and Progressive Era

T 10/21 **The End of the Frontier**

- Read:** Frederick Jackson Turner, “Significance of the Frontier in American History” <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/TURNER/chapter1.html>

R 10/23 **Urbanization**

- Read:** *Wonders of Phrenology Revealed (1841)
*Jacob Riis Describes Life in the Tenements (1890)
*The Bowery on a Saturday Night (1871)
*Frederick Law Olmstead Describes New York(1870)
*A Day at Coney Island (1874)

T 10/28 **Corruption in the Gilded Age**

- Read:** *Andrew Carnegie, “The Gospel of Wealth” (1889)
*John Rockefeller on the Success of Standard Oil (1899)
*Lincoln Steffens on Urban Political Corruption (1904)
*Charles Monroe Sheldon, “What Would Jesus Do?” (1897)

R 10/30 **The Populist Movement**

- Read:** *The Omaha Platform of the Populist Party (1892)
*Jack Conroy, “Uncle Ollie’s Spite Fence”

T 11/4 **Popularization of Populism: Will Rogers**

Read: *Larry May, "Will Rogers and the Radicalism of Tradition"

Video: *Steamboat 'Round the Bend*

R 11/6 **Social Reform Movements**

Read: *Jane Addams on the Fight Against Poverty (1910)

*Mother Jones Attacks Child Labor

*The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire (1911)

*Ida B. Wells, "Southern Horrors"

*"Are Women People?"

*Anzia Yezierska, "The Free Vacation House" (1920)

T 11/11 **Midterm II**

Unit 4: Globalization and American Culture

R 11/13 **Discussion of Globalization Project**

Frontpage Workshop: Meet in Classroom Bldg 407-8

T 11/18 **Using MJ and Nike to Define Globalization**

Read: Walter Lafeber, *M.J. & the New Global Capitalism* "Intro." & Chaps 1-3

R 11/20 **Read:** Lafeber, *Michael Jordan* Chaps 4, 6, & 7

Work on Web Projects (CLB 407-8)

T 11/25 **Critiquing Globalization**

Read: *Thomas Friedman "Winners Take All"

*Naomi Klein, "Democracy in Shackles?: Who Benefits From Free Trade?"

T 12/2 Work on Web Project

R 12/4 **Web Project Drafts Due:** Class Presentations and Peer Review

Appendix D: Global Oklahoma Project Assignment Sheet

Goals and Rationale: Many of our discussions this semester have centered around issues of identity and its construction vis-à-vis an “other.” In particular, we have focused on the construction of a sense of American identity in contrast to Indian (Iroquois) identity, British identity, French identity, black identity, immigrant identity, and so on. This understanding of identity as a social construction—a product of relations between peoples—implies that identity is never static but always changing as the society changes. Perhaps the greatest change of the last 30 years has been the global integration of economic, political, and cultural life, a process known as “globalization.” The goal of this project is to gain a better understanding of how these new global relations have impacted our sense of local identity, of what it means to be an Oklahoman and an American.

General Instructions: In groups of 2-3 you will work collaboratively to help explain how global relations impact the local context of Oklahoma. You will do this by identifying and studying one tangible way in which the processes of globalization, specifically economic globalization, touch our lives in Oklahoma. Together with your partner(s), you will produce a web page that addresses this global connection and its impact on local social relations. Specifically, your web page will explain the nature of the global connection and then consider how it requires Oklahomans and/or Americans to reconceptualize their sense of themselves as a people (i.e. their identity). **YOU MUST INCORPORATE REFERENCES TO AT LEAST THREE SECONDARY SOURCES DEALING WITH YOUR TOPIC IN THE TEXT THAT COMPRISES THE BODY OF THE WEB PAGE.** That is, you must quote, summarize, or paraphrase these sources to lend authority to your claims about the impact of globalization on Oklahoma.

Requirements: The web page must include a title that identifies the objective, theme, or angle of the page, approximately 1000 words of text (the equivalent of 4 double-spaced pages) that expounds on this topic or theme, and multimedia elements that enhance and expand the analysis (hyperlinks to other sites of information on the internet; images, graphics, sounds, etc. that illustrate or comment upon the issues that are the focus of the page, and so on). In addition, to the main content, each page must include a bibliography that identifies the source of all information, images, sounds, etc. This bibliography **MUST** conform to the Modern Language Association’s style for formatting citations (see the handout on “MLA Hints” inside the “Web Project” folder in the “Assignments” section of Blackboard for instructions on how to use MLA format). Finally, the page must list your names as authors of the project.

Web pages should be submitted on a CD-Rom. The file should be saved under the name of your specific subtopic (“immigration.html,” for example, not “globalization.html”).

A Word About Style: Remember that your goal is to communicate information and design your web page accordingly. Avoid garish colors or overly ornate font styles. You will be penalized if your web page hurts the viewers' eyes or otherwise impedes communication. Ultimately, however, I am grading the content of the web page more than its design. Pretty pages that say nothing will fail; less-pretty pages that say interesting and important things will pass. "A" quality pages will incorporate form and content to produce a consistent message.

Grading: Your work will be graded collaboratively; that is, you and your partner(s) will receive the same grade on the assignment, so each of you will be responsible for policing each other and keeping each other on task. The research plan and annotated bibliography will count for 50 points; the web page will count for 150 points. Together this assignment comprises 20% (200 points) of your course grade.

Due Dates: Dec. 4 Web Page Draft; Oral Presentations and Peer Review
Dec. 9 Final Web Page on CD-Rom

Topic Ideas

To give you a clearer idea of what's appropriate for this assignment, here is a selection of possible topics. You are encouraged to identify your own topic related to globalization and its impact on Oklahoma; these should be used only if you can't think of one yourself. In general, the more specific and narrow your focus the better, so I would select a particular example (a business, group or person), in each case, to focus the discussion on.

- Trace the production process your Nike shoes or Levi jeans followed and consider what that means for the "made in America" notion of production. In what sense are these "American" products or "American" companies? Are such descriptions meaningful anymore and where does that leave local producers and consumers?
- Consider what the globalization of culture has meant for local cultural producers. For example, how does the global size and structure of McDonald's impact Oklahoma's local burger joints? How does the formation of global media corporations alter the local media or impact local cultural producers (musicians, for example)?
- How has the formation of the "World Wide Web" impacted local cultural production and dissemination? For example, how has the existence of file-sharing sites, like Napster or Kazaa, enabled musicians to reach a broader audience? How have local businesses, political organizations, and regular individuals used the internet to connect to a broader world (I'd focus on a specific example)?
- Discuss how the Port of Catoosa fits into global trade and what that means for Oklahomans. How important is the Port to local business and

culture? How has its presence change the way Oklahomans represent themselves to the world?

- Examine the causes and effects of Hispanic immigration in Tulsa or OKC. How is this connected to processes of globalization and what does it mean for the identity of these communities?
- Examine the impact of NAFTA on corporate expansion or corporate downsizing in Oklahoma. How has global trade impacted Oklahoma businesses and what does this mean for the state's identity?
- Examine the impact of global financial relations on corporate expansion or downsizing in OK. For instance, why did WorldCom and Williams suddenly experience financial crisis after years of good times? What has this crisis meant for the identity of Tulsa, in particular, as a city?
- Consider the impact of human rights discourse on local politics. For example, how has a human rights narrative been mobilized by local Indian tribes to stake claims for resources and to define their identity?

Notes

1. For a good overview (and indictment) of how exceptionalism framed historical research, see Daniel T. Rodgers, "Exceptionalism" (1998).

2. See, for example, the essays collected in Donald Pease, *Revisionary Interventions into the Americanist Canon* (1994a), *National Identities and Post-Americanist Narratives* (1994b), as well as Amy Kaplan and Pease, *Cultures of U.S. Imperialism* (1993). David Noble (2002) provides an excellent overview of much of the new critical, comparative, global, and multiethnic work being done by American Studies scholars in history, literary studies, and other fields, including exemplary work by Lisa Lowe (1996), José David Saldivar (1997), and George Lipsitz (1994; 2001; 2006).

3. Below are the themes of the ASA annual meetings since 1996, starting with the most recent. Note the emphasis on multiplicity, complexity, linkages, transnational influences and interconnections:

América Aquí: Transhemispheric Visions and Community Connections (2007)
 The United States From Inside and Out: Transnational American Studies (2006)
 Groundwork: Space and Place in American Cultures (2005)
 Crossroads of Cultures (2004)
 Violence and Belonging (2003)
 The Local and the Global (2002)
 Multiple Publics/Civic Voices (2001)
 American Studies in the World/The World in American Studies (2000)
 Crossing Borders/Crossing Centuries (1999)
 American Studies and the Question of Empire: Histories, Cultures and Practices (1998)
 Going Public: Defining Public Culture(s) in the Americas (1997)
 Global Migration, American Cultures, and the State (1996)

4. Titles of other recent addresses also evince this desire to question the meaning of "America" and its "place" in the world and to define a new "field-imaginary" for American studies. Here are a few:

Vicki Ruiz, "Citizen Restaurant: American Imaginaries, American Communities" (2007)
 Emory Elliott, "Diversity in the United States and Abroad: What Does it Mean When American Studies is Transnational?" (2007)
 Karen Halttunen, "American Studies in Place" (2006)
 Shelley Fisher Fishkin, "Crossroads of Cultures: The Transnational Turn in American Studies" (2005)
 Amy Kaplan, "Violent Belongings and the Question of Empire Today" (2004)
 Stephen Sumida, "Where in the World Is American Studies?" (2003)
 George Sanchez, "Working at the Crossroads: American Studies for the 21st Century" (2002)
 Michael Frisch "Prismatics, Multivalence, and Other Riffs on the Millennial Moment" (2001)
 Mary C. Kelley "Taking Stands: American Studies at Century's End" (2000)
 Janice Radway, "What's in a Name" (1999)
 Mary Helen Washington, "Disturbing the Peace: What Happens to American Studies If You Put African American Studies at the Center" (1998)

Patricia Nelson Limerick, "Insiders and Outsiders: The Borders of the USA and the Limits of the ASA" (1997)

5. This approach is inspired by the work of anthropologists, sociologists, and cultural geographers, who ground the study of globalization in the context of everyday locales and communities. See, for example, Arjun Appadurai (1996), Zygmunt Bauman (1998; 2000), Doug Brown (2001), Mike Davis (1990; 2007), Ulf Hannerz (1996), David Harvey (2006b; 2006a), Doreen Massey (1994), Katharyne Mitchell (1996), David Morley and Kevin Robins (1995), Saskia Sassen (1998; 2001), Edward Soja (1996; 2000), John Tomlinson (1999), and Sharon Zukin (1991). For more macro-level approaches to globalization, see Jagdish Bhagwati (2005), Benjamin Barber (1996), Manuel Castells (2000; 2004), Thomas Friedman (2000; 2007), Scott Lash and John Urry (1991), Masao Miyoshi (1993), George Ritzer (2007), Roland Robertson (1992), Joseph Stiglitz (2003), John Urry (1991) and Immanuel Wallerstein (1979). The following volumes also contain a mixture of macro and micro level analyses and perspectives on globalization that may be useful references: Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins, eds. *Cosmopolitics* (1998), Mike Featherstone, ed. *Global Culture* (1990), Mike Featherstone, Scott Lash and Roland Robertson, eds. *Global Modernities* (1995), Anthony King, ed. *Culture, Globalization and the World-System* (1997), Ritzer, ed. *McDonaldization: The Reader* (2002), and Rob Wilson and Wimal Dissanayake, eds. *Global/Local* (1996). See also the special double-issue of *American Studies* devoted to "Globalization, Transnationalism, and the End of the American Century" (Vol. 41, no. 2/3, Summer/Fall 2000). For an excellent collection of the major theoretical statements on globalization, see Frank Lechner and John Boli, eds. *The Globalization Reader* (2007).

6. In 2002, for example, an OSU fraternity sponsored a costume party at which several members dressed in blackface and KKK hoods and pretended to enact a lynching as "entertainment." The pictures surfaced on a photo-sharing site some days later and made national headlines. Student reaction was mixed. While there were several rallies to protest the actions and the administration's tepid response, students interviewed for a documentary produced by my Introduction to American Studies students indicated that they felt OSU was a diverse place with a tradition of tolerance and no need for additional diversity training or programming.

7. See the OSU "Fact Sheet" for a complete break down of the student body composition: http://osu.okstate.edu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=311&Itemid=90.

8. We also read statements from Carnegie and Rockefeller, of course, to provide their views on the subject. Of particular use is Carnegie's "The Gospel of Wealth," which, while defending capitalist relations, also acknowledges that the disparities of income and experience produced through capitalism are morally untenable and must be alleviated (if only to serve the self-interest of the wealthy in preventing labor unrest and revolt).

9. There is a useful BBC film called *Tales from the Global Economy: The Cappuccino Trail* (2002) that could be used to frame this discussion. You might also use select portions from John Ryan and Alan Thein Durning's *Stuff: The Secret Lives of Everyday Things* (1997) to read in conjunction with this exercise. Both of these texts trace the networks of production for various foodstuffs and detail the effects of contemporary practices of extraction, processing, packaging, and consumption on the environment. For reference, there are also a number of texts that address the global histories and contexts of food production and circulation, including *The True History of Chocolate* by Sophie and Michael Coe (2007); *Cod: Biography of the Fish That Changed the World* and *Salt: A World History* by Mark Kurlansky (1998); *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* by Sidney Mintz (1986); *Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How It Transformed Our World* by Mark Pendergrast (2003); *Tastes of Paradise: A Social History of Spices, Stimulants, and Intoxicants* by Wolfgang Schivelbusch (1993); *Spice: The History of a Temptation* by Jack Turner (2005); and *Coffee: A Dark History* by Anthony Wild (2005). There are also a number of works on consumer capitalism that could be referenced, including Mona Domosh, *American Commodities in an Age of Empire* (Domosh 2006); Tim Edwards, *Contradictions of Consumption: Concepts, Practices, and Politics in Consumer Society* (2000); Ben Fine, *The World of Consumption* (1993); Daniel Miller, ed., *Acknowledging Consumption* (1995); Roberta Sassatelli, *Consumer Culture: History, Theory and Politics* (2006); and Peter Stearns, *Consumerism in World History* (2006).

10. See Susan Willis' essay "Learning from the Banana" (1987) on this issue.

11. A similar exercise might be to have students trace the production of a piece of clothing they are wearing. Where were those particular Nikes produced, by whom, and under what conditions? Where were those Wrangler jeans produced? Have students report on the structure of the corporations behind the brand names they so cherish. For the purposes of this exercise, it is not necessary to pinpoint the site of production definitively; just get the students to think about the producers and corporations as real entities, rather than obscure names or symbols. The books *Stuff* (Ryan and Durning 1997) and *Travels of a T-Shirt* (Rivoli 2005) could be useful to frame this exercise, along with the PBS Independent Lens documentary *T-Shirt Travels* (Bloemen 2002). Again, it is best to conclude this exercise with a discussion of why the "secret life of things" (Ryan and Durning 1997) is never really noticed or remarked upon by individuals in the U.S. This leads students to a recognition that their environment is socially-constructed to produce certain perceptions and block others, and, therefore, it is wise to assume a skeptical attitude toward environmental cues.

12. Other accessible texts include Barber (1996) and Ritzer (2007; 2002). Of Ritzer's works, I prefer the *Reader* because it is more interdisciplinary in approach and offers a variety of case studies that can provide a model for the student's own case studies. Thomas Friedman's *Lexus and the Olive Tree* (2000) is also accessible, but it tends to be jargon-ridden and to lack a historical sense of the embeddedness of economics in social systems. If I use portions of *Lexus* in class, I supplement the reading with an essay from Naomi Klein's more grounded counter-argument *Fences and Windows* (2002).

13. On culture imperialism, see Ien Ang (1985), Daniel Bilteryst (1991), Peter Golding and Phil Harris (1997), Daniel Miller (2000), Herbert Schiller (1969; 1976; 1979; 1985; 1991), John Sinclair, et al. (1996), John Straubhaar (1991), John Tomlinson (1991; 1999), Michel Tracey (1993), and Jeremy Tunstall (1977; 2007). For more American Studies-oriented treatments of the history and debate over U.S. cultural domination, see Victoria de Grazia (2006), Rob Kroes (1996), Richard Kuisel (1997), Richard Pells (1998), Emily Rosenberg (1982), Robert Rydell and Kroes (2005), Rheinhold Wagnleitner (1994), and Wagnleitner and Elaine Tyler May (2000).

14. For a fuller accounting of these advantages see Randy Bass (2000c; 2000b; 2007).

15. I am experimenting with this more dynamic model of collaborative-learning in my current American studies Theories and Methods course; you can sample the results at (<http://americanwiki.pbwiki.com>). If you are interested in having your students collaborate on the site's production, feel free to contact me stacy.takacs@okstate.edu. For general information about what a "wiki" is and how it may be used for educational purposes, see Will Richardson, *Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, and Other Powerful Web Tools for Classrooms* (2006).

16. For general information and ideas about using on-line tools in the American studies classroom, as well as sample projects, see the ASA-sponsored Visible Knowledge Project (<http://crossroads.georgetown.edu/vkp/index.htm>) and the AHA-sponsored "Teaching and Learning in the Digital Age" (<http://www.historians.org/tl/>). See also John McClymer's, *The AHA Guide to Teaching and Learning with New Media* (2005). For more general information on using computers in the college classroom to enhance the learning experience, see the journal *Computers and Composition* (<http://www.bgsu.edu/cconline/home.htm>).

17. Naomi Klein's critique of Bush administration policy in *Fences and Windows* (2002), especially the essay "Democracy in Shackles," develops this argument about the equation of "America" and capitalism. I had my students read it in preparation for this assignment. One thing we discussed in addition to Klein's claims was the confusion inherent in the use of the term "America" to connote only the United States and not the rest of the North and South American continents.

18. This is not to argue that print culture is obsolete or on the wane. Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin (2000) argue convincingly that print is being remediated by digital culture in ways that both alter and sustain it as a social formation. The point, rather, is to acknowledge that print and digital media possess different properties and produce different phenomenological experiences. If "print-capitalism" (Anderson 1992) generated a sense of simultaneity that was central to the formation of the nation-state system, then we could argue that "electronic-capitalism" (Davis 2002) produces a new mode of "being-in-time" that enables individuals to imagine themselves as part of a more extensive and complex global system.

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