

GLOBALIZATION AND RESISTANCE
FALL 2008 130GR, 5-7:50, CHEM 1179
PROFESSOR: WILLIAM I. ROBINSON
OFFICE HOURS: T. 2:30 – 4:30, ELLISON 2706, OR BY APPOINTMENT
TAs: VERONICA MONTES, veronicamontes@umail.ucsb.edu
YOUSEF BAKER, youseft@gmail.com, yousef@umail.ucsb.edu

Globalization, it is widely recognized, is profoundly remaking social structure and transforming the lives of people in every corner of the planet. Our personal biographies are linked to increasingly dense networks of global interrelations, as the integration of societies, economies, and cultures fundamentally transforms human life. The concept of globalization is contested, meaning that there are different and competing understandings of what the term means and how to assess the process. Here are three distinct approaches:

Globalization as a concept refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole...both concrete global interdependence and consciousness of the global whole in the twentieth century

-- Roland Robertson, *Globalization*

[Under Globalization] we participate in a more radical and profound commonality than has ever been experienced in the history of capitalism. The fact is that we participate in a productive world made up of communication and social networks, interactive services, and common languages.

-- Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*

In theoretical terms, globalization can essentially be seen as the near-culmination of a centuries-long process of the spread of capitalist production around the world and its displacement of all precapitalist relations, bring about a new form of connection between all human beings around the world.

-- William I. Robinson, *A Theory of Globalization Capitalism*

While the summits of power in global society applaud the process, it has generated rising opposition and often militant fight-backs around the world, in part because, as the empirical evidence demonstrates, it is resulting in a concentration of wealth among elites and high consumption sectors, escalating inequalities, new hardships, the disempowerment and even destruction of whole communities and peoples, alienation, ecological destruction, and all sorts of social conflicts. It is impossible to understand the numerous political and military conflicts and cultural clashes around the world in the early 21st century without understanding globalization and its consequences.

With this in mind, this course has a dual focus. One is to examine the process of globalization from a social scientific point of view, with special emphasis on the rise of a global economy. The other is to explore some of the diverse forms of resistance that globalization has generated among the outcast, exploited and marginalized communities, working classes, women, and others who suffer the effects of increasing hardships, inequalities, and insecurities.

This course will require hard work, and will also be an eye-opener for those willing to work hard and to **think critically**. The course attempts to help students develop the critical thinking analytical skills, and the historical perspective necessary, to examine your own deeply held assumptions regarding the social world and to apply sociological inquiry in an attempt to provide explanations for these phenomena.

Please note: you should hold on to this syllabus, as it is a week-by-week guide to the course, readings, assignment due dates, and so forth.

REQUIRED READINGS

- 1) **George Collier and Elizabeth Lowery, *Basta! Land and the Zapatista Rebellion in Chiapas***
- 2) **Naomi Klein, *No Logo***
- 3) **Ashwin Desai, *We are the Poor***
- 4) **Reading packet, available from Grafikart, 6550 Pardall Road, Isla Vista, ph: 968-1485**

GRADING, ASSIGNMENTS, AND RELATED ISSUES

There are no exams for this course, but you **WILL** be expected to **WORK HARD** and to prepare a number of written assignments. If you are not prepared for a lot of reading and effort this course is not for you.

Twenty five points will derive from five in-class “pop quizzes” on the readings (five points per quiz). Forty five points will derive from three written “briefs” on course readings and videos (15) points for each brief), and the remaining 30 percent will derive from a final report based on your exploration of websites on the World Social Forum and other websites from Global Justice Movement organizations. There will be opportunities for extra credit (TBA). Please note: ***A hard copy of all assignments must be turned in; I do not accept any assignments by e-mail.***

You are expected to do **ALL** the assigned readings and to come to class prepared to discuss these readings. Please bring each week’s reading to class with you. You are encouraged to ask questions, debate, and provide critical commentary on the readings and the lectures.

Students are expected to arrive on time to class and to not leave early unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. I also ask that you turn off cell phones and beepers while in class.

Please note that attendance is not voluntary; it is required. I may take spot attendance checks at any time. You will lose two points for each absence. I may take attendance at any time...first five minutes, last five minutes, etc. Even if you are present for most of the class you will be counted as absent if you are not present when I take role. The only excused absences are medical and family emergencies, with proper documentation.

Pop Quizzes: There will be five pop quizzes, administered in the first few minutes of class. Each of these five quizzes will be on the readings due on the day the quiz is given. If you have done the readings you will have no problem answering the question and receiving five points. You will receive a zero if you arrive late to class and miss a quiz.

Briefs: You will have to turn in three written briefs on the assigned readings, videos, class lectures and discussions. Each brief should be approximately 3-4 double-spaced typed pages (name and perm number on top). Each brief should develop an *analytical discussion* on the particular topic assigned, mentioning the readings for that topic, lectures, videos and discussions. If your briefs are merely descriptive you will not score much; they must be *analytical*. Please refer below to the week-by-week schedule, which will indicate the topic you are to write on and due dates.

Report on Website: The final graded assignment out of class will be to explore the websites for various Global Justice Movement organizations, starting with the website for the World Social Forum, which you will find at www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/home.asp. Once you are at this site you can enter the English language section if that is the only language you speak. The website has links that discuss the history and objectives of the World Social Forum, others than provide a wide array of articles and commentaries on globalization and resistance in different parts of the world. There are as well links that take you to other web sites dealing with similar topics. (NOTE; the World Social Forum website is not well organized; use your skills to navigate and identify relevant information for your assignment.) You should explore at least five global justice movement websites and at least one pro-globalization website (indicated below as “pro”). Here are some suggestions (NOTE: A MORE COMPLETE LIST OF WEBSITES IS PROVIDED IN THE READING PACKET):

“50 Years is Enough! Campaign, <http://www.50years.org/>
The Global Exchange, <http://www.globalexchange.org/>
ATTAC: <http://www.attac.org/indexfla.htm>

The Maquila Solidarity Network, <http://www.maquilasolidarity.org/>
 Zianet, <http://www.zmag.org/znet>
 International Forum on Globalization, <http://www.ifg.org/>,
 Focus on the Global South: <http://www.focusweb.org/>
 Third World Network: <http://www.twinside.org.sg/>
 Center for Research on Globalization: <http://globalresearch.ca/>
 Transnational Institute: <http://www.tni.org/>
 Institute for Policy Studies: <http://www.ips-dc.org/>
 Rainforest Action Network: <http://www.ran.org/>
 Action for Solidarity, Equality, Environment and Development (A SEED),
<http://www.aseed.net/>
 Food First (Institute for Food and Development Policy), <http://www.foodfirst.org/>
 Friends of the Earth International, <http://www.foei.org/>
 World Trade Organization: <http://www.wto.org/> (PRO)
 Open Society Institute (George Soros's website)
http://www.soros.org/about/bios/a_soros (PRO)
 Globalization Research Center: <http://www.cio.com/research/global/> (PRO)
 World Bank homepage: <http://www.worldbank.org/> (PRO)
 The Globalist: <http://www.theglobalist.com/> (PRO)
 World Economic Forum: <http://www.weforum.org/> (PRO)

For this assignment you will need to spend a number of hours on the web exploring these websites, reading some of the articles and commentaries, and gaining an understanding of some of the popular literature and features on the web that have to do with the theme of globalization and resistance. Then you will write up a report, between 5-8 pages approximately, on your experience and your analysis of the exercise. This report will be due the last day of class. It should be a wide-ranging analytical discussion. You should draw on course readings, lectures, and other materials to analyze the content of these web sites, relating that content to the course and what you have learned. ***Demonstrate your analytical prowess and ability to apply what you have learned in the course.*** Please be prepared as well to discuss in class your experience.

COURES OVERVIEW AND SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Below is a tentative schedule of themes, readings, and assignments for each week. Please note that this schedule is subject to change.

Sept. 30: Course Overview and Introduction: What is globalization? What is Resistance?

No readings this week

Oct. 7: The Global Economy

Read: Ellwood, “Globalization then and now”, Steger, “The Economic Dimension of Globalization”, Robinson, “Understanding Global Capitalism”, Ellwood, “The Bretton Woods trio” (all in reading packet)

Film: Global Assembly Line

Oct. 14: Globalization and Labor/The Global Workers Movement

Read: Labor in the Global
World-Class Working Class
Labor and the Global Logistics Revolution
Fighting Sweatshops
Globalization and Social Movements
(all in the reading packet)

First Brief Due: Discuss your impressions of the readings for the first two weeks. What challenges does the global economy present for the global workers’ movement. How do you think workers should respond to capitalist globalization? What did you learn from these readings? What critical observations could you make on this week’s topic?

Film: Life and Debt

Oct. 21: Global Indigenous and Anti-Racist Struggles

Case Study in Globalization and Resistance: Mexico and the Zapatistas

Film: Zapatistas

Read: George Collier and Elizabeth Lowery, *Basta! Land and the Zapatista Rebellion in Chiapas*

Second Brief Due: Discuss the Collier and Lowery study. How has Chiapas been affected by integration into global capitalism? What is the relationship between race, class, and capitalist development, as discussed by the authors? What questions did the study raise for you? What did you not understand or would wish to discuss further? What critical observations may you have?

- Oct. 28: The Global Immigrant Rights Movement**
- Read: “Aqui Estamos y No Nos Vamos!: Global Capital and Immigrant Rights” (in reading packet)**
- Film: Made in L.A.**
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- Nov. 4: Feminism and the Women’s Movement
The Global Environmental Movement**
- Read: Globalization of the Women’s Movement
A Planetary Failure
Cremating Monsanto
Monsoon Risings
“Carnival of the Oppressed”
(all in the reading packet)**
- Film: Delta Force**
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- Nov 11: HOLIDAY, NO CLASS TODAY**
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- Nov. 18: Case Study in Globalization and Resistance: South Africa**
- Read: Ashwin Desai, *We are the Poor***
- Powerpoint presentation**
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- Nov. 25: Global Justice Movement, I : World Social Forum**
- Read: Naomi Klein, *No Logo*, 1st part of book.
“Introduction: The World Social Forum and the Reinvention of Democracy” (in reading packet)**
- Film: This is What Democracy Looks Like**
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- Dec. 2: The Global Justice Movement, II: Further Studies in Resistance from Around the World (MST of Brazil, African Students, Assembly of the Poor of Thailand, and Indymedia)**

**Read: Naomi Klein, *No Logo*, remainder of book.
Cutting the Wire (in reading packet)
“Together We Start a Struggle” (in reading packet)
“Indymedia: Don’t Hate the Media, Be the Media (in reading packet)
“An April of Death,” and Kenyan Students Resist the World Bank”
(in reading packet)
“Power Generation” and “Peace Message to the Public” (in reading
packet)**

Third Brief Due: What does Klein mean by “no logo?” What did you learn from this reading? How is the content of this book related to your own life and experiences? How do you think the concept of “branding” (and the book more generally) is related to the other topics we have covered in the course? What are some aspects of the book with which you agree? Disagree? Requires further exploration? What further questions does this book raise for you?

Film: The Fourth World War

Course Conclusions: Capitalist Globalization, Alternative Globalizations, and Resistance: What does the Future Hold?

NOTE: *Report on Website is due on Dec. 2.*