

CES 244
Critical Globalizations
Spring 2013
Todd 302
MWF 12:10 - 1:00

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office hours:
T 12:30 - 3:00
and by appointment

Course texts

Delia D. Aguilar and Anne E. Lacsamana, eds. *Women and Globalization*. Amherst, NY: Humanity, 2004.

Janet Byrne, ed. *The Occupy Handbook*. New York: Back Bay, 2012.

Coursepack available at Cougar Copies in the CUB.

Ben Crow and Suresh K. Lodha. *The Atlas of Global Inequality*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2011.

Wayne Ellwood. *The No-Nonsense Guide to Globalization*. Oxford, UK: New Internationalist, 2011. (Be sure to have the newest edition, from 2011.)

Michael Parenti. *The Face of Imperialism*. Boulder: Paradigm, 2011.

We will also read and view various handouts, films, and Web sites. You are responsible for keeping up with these as they are assigned.

Introduction, course description, learning goals, learning outcomes

This course could be seen to overlap greatly with CES 301, Race and Global Inequality, and in fact we will read two books—*Women and Globalization* and *The Atlas of Global Inequality*—that I assigned in that course when I most recently taught it, in Spring 2012. However, I see this course as different in an important way: While the focus of CES 301 is on race, our focus will be on the political economy. In upper-level courses in theory, especially at the graduate level, processes of racial formation and structures of racism are examined internationally, not only in the United States. Local, regional, and national cultures have made those processes and structures look different in different places, but the basic causes (greed and power) and effects (racism and poverty) are importantly similar. While all courses in Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies are critical—for that matter, all humanities courses teach critical thinking—still the word “critical” in our course's name urges us not only to study the ways that globalization works but also to analyze and critique those ways.

“Political economy” evokes, in many people, specters of Marxism and socialism. While some of our sources and approaches certainly derive from Marxist criticism, most derive from other perspectives. Our aim is the aim of Ethnic Studies generally: to learn history and culture from the perspectives of the marginalized, the silenced. But those perspectives are multiple, and often clash with each other, and we must be aware of those differences. How has globalization affected factory workers in Bangladesh differently from factory workers in Detroit?

As for CES 301, this course could conceivably exist in other departments such as history and political science. It exists here because the central goal of Ethnic Studies is social justice. This is a political work, and yet it is every bit as academically and intellectually rigorous as the work of those other departments. We could even argue that, in order to reach our political goal

persuasively, we must be even more intellectually rigorous than those departments. In any case, the most important tool for doing good work in this course will be critical reading and thinking.

In fifteen weeks, we cannot cover all aspects of globalization. We will start by asking basic questions. Who benefits from globalization? Why do mainstream media either construct globalization as inherently good or take a neutral stand? Why do most of the world's people feel that globalization is harmful, and why are their views ignored by media? Is it really as simple as the Occupy movement believed?—that the wealthiest few control the economy and the media and that therefore they construct dominant narratives? If so, why are the “99 percent” not organizing a rebellion? Even if the number of people who identify as middle class is shrinking, still many of them still support capitalism and the “1 percent.” Why?

In an essay in the MLA's *Profession 2006* Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o argues, “An irony of globalization is that the globe is shrinking into a village because of information technology and yet its divisions of culture have deepened” (37). He goes on to blame these divisions on “varieties of fundamentalism: ethnic, racial, and nationalist;” and explains:

Democracy becomes defined as the right of capital to move freely within and across states but not as the right of labor. Racism, which also takes the extreme form of religious bigotry through the boast ‘my race is the chosen race,’ has become more pronounced, and as a result some countries are even calling for the erection of actual physical barriers around their territories. (37-38)

If he is right, then why do we accept a system that gives more rights to money than to workers? This is especially troubling since much of that money does not even exist except in substitutes that are assumed by capitalists to have value. And, more disturbing, why do media, when politicians argue the differences between “revenue enhancement” and “spending cuts,” fail to report the human cost of budget cuts? Here in the state of Washington, why have media, in all their stories on budget cuts, failed to connect this politics of austerity to, for example, tuition increases, rising inequalities in healthcare, and more homelessness?

Starting with an assumption that globalization begins in colonization, we will briefly examine histories of European colonization as well as the history of decolonization. I will argue that one of the two or three most important histories of the twentieth century is the decolonization movement that aimed for the liberation of nations in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific Islands from troubling economic and political dependencies on Europe and the United States. Why do we not learn this history in our high schools and even in most college courses? On the other hand, decolonization never completely fulfilled its goals. If it had, contemporary globalization could probably never have controlled international markets to such a frightening extent. My colleague Kim Christen, in her syllabus for this course in Fall 2008, wrote that “international legal precedents . . . set the stage for massive land grabs and political collaborations that facilitated the exclusions of people of color, women, and ‘natives’ from the ruling global elite.”

Fortunately, recent years have seen the emergence of many activist critics, both inside and outside academia, who have constructed urgent warnings about globalization. Many of our sources will come from academia or even the small world of economics itself, many will come from the activist fringes, and a few will come from communities victimized by globalization.

Our goals include the discovery of answers to these questions:

- 1) What is globalization and what makes it dangerous to marginalized peoples?
- 2) What is the relationship, if any, between inequalities created by globalization and inequalities long existing within a nation such as the United States?

- 3) Since globalization manifests differently in different places, how is resistance possible?
- 4) To what extent must resistance be localized? and to what extent must it be globalized?
- 5) Since our previous educations have not prepared us to think on global scales, then how can we—how must we—think and write about it?
- 6) How can we think and write critically without co-opting the voices of oppressed peoples who live thousands of miles away?
- 7) How can we turn resistance into justice?

Your answers to these questions comprise the desired learning outcomes of this course.

Requirements

Attendance: Attendance is required. After the fifth class meeting, I will distribute an attendance signup sheet, and then you will be permitted three unexcused absences, after which each absence results in deduction of one-third of a letter grade for the course. Any absence is unexcused if it is not legitimate and not cleared with me, preferably in writing, in advance. **Your ninth unexcused absence results in an automatic F in the course.** As our readings and discussions will consider material that you have probably not covered in your earlier education, attendance is especially important. Therefore, discretionary **doctors' appointments, study sessions for other classes, and career fairs are not excusable absences.** Do not come to me late in the semester with explanations for earlier absences. It is your responsibility to let me know as soon as possible about excusable absences. If you wait till weeks later, those absences will not be excused. You are expected to attend, arrive on time, leave only when class is over, and participate in an engaged manner. This policy is absolute, and it is not negotiable. It is also your responsibility to know this policy so that you will need no reminder of it later in the semester. This syllabus is a contract, and you are expected to know and abide by it.

Participation: Class discussions will depend on your reading the assigned texts and coming to class ready to talk about them. Participation takes many forms: discussing issues raised in class or in our texts, keeping up with local and national and global events that are relevant to our work, joining an activist group working for social justice, writing a letter to an editor on an issue we discuss, even presenting your research at an academic conference. Some form of participation is required. If you do not participate, do not expect to get a high grade.

Journals: You will write five journals, one or two pages on each book. Each journal must clearly identify and respond to the text. For most books, write a one-sentence statement of each reading's thesis or argument, and explain why it is (or is not) persuasive. I will give you special instructions for *The Occupy Handbook* and *Women and Globalization*.

Final paper: Your final paper must be five to seven pages, engaging an issue we discuss and read about. Though the paper itself is due near the end of the term, you will start working on it early. This early assignment will be a proposal, a one-page typed statement of a problem in globalization that you wish to explore in detail, with your plan for researching and covering the issue. In the last three weeks you may present your paper before the class.

Presentation: You will lead class in discussion of either an assigned reading or your final paper. If our class is large, you will present with a classmate. Text Presentations merely involve leading a discussion of an assigned text. Ask about authors' arguments and evidence, and offer your own observations—ideas, not opinions. You may use media or slides, but only to illustrate your argument, not to replace it. Prepare to present for roughly ten to fifteen minutes—no fewer

than ten, or your grade will be affected. (These instructions will change if our class is large enough to warrant your presenting with a classmate. I will let you know during the first week.)

Here is a breakdown of the course grading:

Attendance and participation	10 percent (but see note above, on Attendance)
Journals	25 percent (5 percent each)
Proposal	20 percent
Paper	40 percent
Presentation	5 percent

Course policies and community standards

Ideally, each class meeting will be a lively, student-directed and student-centered discussion of our course material. Short of that ideal, you will still come to class prepared to discuss readings assigned for that day. I hope we will model a good community, driven by shared concerns and goals even when we disagree. To do well, please note the following guidelines:

1) For all reading assignments, be sure to read authors' explanatory footnotes and to scan their sources. *Bring the assigned reading to class.*

2) No written assignments will be accepted late unless cleared, for good and documented reason, in advance.

3) No assignments will be accepted through e-mail unless cleared, for good reason, in advance.

4) All written assignments must be typed, in standard font and margins, and stapled. Number your pages. Your final paper should have a title. If you cannot think of a good descriptive title for your paper, then you probably do not have a good argument.

5) Extra credit opportunities exist. For example, early this semester the Common Reading program will be bringing to campus the family of Henrietta Lacks, the subject of Rebecca Skloot's book *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*. You are responsible for keeping up with events on campus and in the area and letting me and your classmates know about them in advance, so that you may write a one-page analysis of them for extra credit.

6) If, in any of your written assignments, you use information or ideas from other sources, whether you are quoting or merely paraphrasing, you must cite those sources. This is true even when your sources are interviewees for oral histories. Failure to cite will be counted as plagiarism and will result in a failing grade.

7) Do not read outside material in class, and turn off phones and all other media devices unless you can show that you are using them for note-taking. This is an issue of common courtesy. If you find your phone or laptop more absorbing than class, then stay away.

8) If you use outside sources in your paper, then you may choose your citation style—whether MLA, Chicago, Turabian, APA, AMA, CBE, Harvard, or any other—but you must remain consistent. Do not mix styles.

9) I will be very disappointed if, at some time during the semester, you don't find extremely distasteful or disagreeable a comment made by me or a classmate. Argue—defend your position, demonstrating your knowledge of history. But do so respectfully. Name-calling is not educational. Neither is hate speech—which will not be tolerated.

10) Consider others' views. Reflect on your own social location and your privileges.

11) The best way to show your respect is by listening. Cultivate good listening skills, if you have not done so already. And ask questions.

12) Learn a historically informed definition of racism—Ruth Wilson Gilmore’s definition at the end of this syllabus is a good place to start—and challenge all racist discourse.

13) Reflect your own grasp of history and social relations by respecting shy and quiet classmates, and by deferring to the experiences of people of color.

14) Finally, understand the rage of people who are victims of systematic injustice. James Baldwin wrote that people of color have an obligation to feel and express rage over this nation’s history of racism. If injustice does not fill you with rage, then you should ask yourself why.

Note on language: In our readings and discussions you may encounter words or phrases that will be, to some sensibilities, coarse or vulgar or racist. By themselves, no “mere” words are offensive. What makes a word vulgar or racist is its usage by a particular speaker in a particular context. White men such as Glenn Beck complain that, for example, they are not allowed to say the “n” word without being labeled racist while black men use it among themselves all the time. To “earn” the right to that word, Beck must first endure 500 years of racism. When you see and hear such words, consider their context. Who speaks them? Why? And to whom?

Academic integrity: Plagiarism or cheating of any kind will result in your failing the course. (See the WSU Student Handbook on Academic Dishonesty.) Academic honesty is much easier to achieve than academic dishonesty, if only you observe Course Policy 6 above: Whenever you use someone else’s information or ideas, cite the source.

If you write a five-sentence paragraph and use a source for all five sentences, even if it is the same source for all the sentences, you must cite that source in every sentence. If you cite your source only at the end of the paragraph, then you have plagiarized the first four sentences (unless you use a style that permits this), and your grade will be affected. This is not negotiable, and you are expected to know the rules for whatever style you use.

Reasonable Accommodation: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Access Center (Washington Building 217) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center.

Campus Safety Plan/Emergency information: In the interest of campus safety and emergency procedures, please become familiar with the information available on the following websites: <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu> (Campus Safety Plan), <http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies> (Emergency management web site), <http://alert.wsu.edu> (WSU Alert site).

Schedule

Please note: Assignments are subject to change. You are responsible for keeping up with changes. Ellwood and Parenti are identified by their authors; the Atlas is simply identified as Atlas; Aguilar and Lacsamana are identified as *Women*; and Byrne is identified as *Occupy*.

Jan 7: Course and community introductions.

Jan 9: Read Atlas, Introduction and first three sections of Chapter 1, 9-21.

Jan 11: Read Coursepack, first two pieces (Springhall and Prashad).

Jan 14: Read Atlas, rest of Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, 22-38. Discuss Occupy Wall Street.

Jan 16: Read Ellwood, 5-28.

Jan 18: Read Atlas, chapters 3 and 4.

Jan 21: No class.

Jan 23: Read Ellwood, 29-63.

Jan 25: Read *Women*, Introduction.

Jan 28: Read Ellwood, 64-110.

Jan 30: Read Ellwood, 111-134. FIRST JOURNAL DUE (Ellwood).

Feb 1: Read *Women*, chapter 2.

Feb 4: Read *Women*, chapter 4.

Feb 6: Read *Women*, chapter 5.

Feb 8: Read *Women*, chapter 6.

Feb 11: Read *Women*, chapter 8.

Feb 13: Read *Women*, chapter 9.

Feb 15: Read *Women*, chapter 12.

Feb 18: No class.

Feb 20: Read Parenti, chapters 1-3.

Feb 22: Read Parenti, chapter 4. PROPOSAL DUE.

Feb 25: Read Parenti, chapters 5-7.

Feb 27: Read Parenti, chapters 8 and 9.

Mar 1: Read Parenti, chapter 10. SECOND JOURNAL DUE (Parenti).

Mar 4: Read *Occupy*, xv-xxii and 3-28.

Mar 6: Read Coursepack, Klein. Film: *The Shock Doctrine*.

Mar 8: Film: *The Shock Doctrine*.

Week of March 11: Spring break.

Mar 18: Read *Occupy*, 29-78.

Mar 20: Read *Occupy*, 79-116.

Mar 22: Read *Occupy*, 117-131 and 141-149.

Mar 25: Read *Occupy*, 150-163 and 173-195.

Mar 27: Read *Occupy*, 196-208, 218-222, 239-244, and 256-264.

Mar 29: Read *Occupy*, 280-306.

Apr 1: Read Atlas, chapters 5-7. THIRD JOURNAL DUE (Atlas).

Apr 3: Read *Occupy*, 462-474.

Apr 5: Read *Occupy*, 475-493. FOURTH JOURNAL DUE (*Occupy*).

Apr 8: Read *Occupy*, 353-361, 370-381, 397-410, and 425-437.

Apr 10: Read *Occupy*, 309-310, 317-329, and 336-347.

Apr 12: No class.

Apr 15: Read Atlas, chapter 8.

Apr 17: Read Ellwood, 135-148. PAPER PRESENTATIONS BEGIN.

Apr 19: Read *Women*, 404-421. FIFTH JOURNAL DUE (*Women*). PRESENTATIONS.

Apr 22: PAPER PRESENTATIONS.

Apr 24: PAPER PRESENTATIONS.

Apr 26: FINAL PRESENTATIONS. End of semester errands and final notes.

Apr 29: Final paper due in my office by 3:00 PM.

A useful definition of racism:

Racism, specifically, is the state-sanctioned or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death.

Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2005. 28.