PLCY 006: Environment and Labor in the Global Economy (3 credits)
Tuesday-Thursday 2:00-3:15 p.m. GM 212 (Graham Memorial, JCUEN)
Professor Richard Andrews pete_andrews@unc.edu
202A Abernethy Hall 843-5011
Office hours: after class each day, or by appointment

The news media have been full of stories about “globalization.” But what exactly is “globalization,” and what impacts is it having – on us and on our own communities, on people in other countries, and on the environment of both? In what ways is it making the world a better place, and in what ways is it causing harm? And in particular, what impacts is it having – positive or negative, or both – on jobs, wages, and working conditions, and on the quality of the natural environment? Is it creating a “race to the bottom, undermining both workers and the condition of the natural environment, as some critics charge, or is it making overall work and environmental conditions better, as some of its advocates believe? And depending on the answers to these questions, what kinds of actions should citizens advocate – by businesses, by governments, by consumers and investors and others – to make sure that globalization creates a better rather than a worse world?

We will explore these questions both as public policy issues and as issues for our own consideration as citizens, consumers, workers, investors, and members of a university community. We will use as examples several major companies – Nike, Wal-Mart, perhaps others – that organize the manufacturing of products on a global scale to sell to us. The course will be led by Professor Andrews (public policy) with participation by a number of guest speakers – and importantly, by each of you.

Learning objectives

The objectives of the seminar are as follows:

Substantive knowledge: Learn about the forces that drive globalization of manufacturing, the environmental and social/labor impacts associated with this process, and how public policies and individual actions can influence them

Research skills: Learn how to use library, Internet, and primary sources (such as interviews) to find and evaluate information for use in research papers and discussions

Critical thinking: Learn how to analyze opinions and arguments for their strengths and weaknesses, to present well-reasoned and factually supported arguments, and to identify and rebut opposing arguments

Writing skills: Learn how to summarize and communicate succinctly the key points of another author’s work, your own critical assessment of his or her arguments, and your own creative and constructive ideas for addressing environmental and labor issues

Oral presentation skills: Learn how to play an effective role in leading and participating in oral discussions
Expectations and assignments

Assignments include:

- Participation! This is a seminar. Each student is responsible for participating actively in all aspects of the course, including readings, discussions, questioning of guest speakers, presentations, and constructive criticism of each other’s ideas.

- Each class: reading notes (key points and your own commentary/critique on them); and initial answers to the discussion questions (these can and should be further refined after the class discussion as well). Written, can be brief (outline format or bullet points, for instance) but neat.

- Before September 6: Field trip to store (pairs): where things come from.

- September 15: What should UNC do about a supplier that doesn’t comply with its labor code? Small group discussions and 2-3 page recommendations paper (from group or with dissenting papers).


- October 4: 5-page paper due, comparison and assessment of the principal arguments for and against globalization, and what conclusions you draw from this debate and why.

- October 25, 27: oral presentations, and 5-page paper due 10/27, on impacts of globalization on your home town

- November 1: research paper topic selection due (one page). (Then schedule individual discussion with instructor to discuss the paper’s focus, research strategies, and potential sources of information.

- November 29-December 6: Oral presentations (Powerpoint presentation of your research in progress, and working bibliography). All other students will also be graded, as part of their participation grades, on their contributions to helping the presenters improve and deepen their research projects. (NOTE: grades in this course are not “curved”, so you are not competing against each other for grades. Students who get high grades in this seminar often are those who compete to help each student as well as themselves to improve research and presentation skills and to deepen everyone’s insights into the topics we are exploring).

- December 8: Final papers due (~10-15 pages)

- December 8: Turn in complete and neat written notes on the readings and class discussions, showing both what you’ve read and learned in class and your own
insights and critiques. Be sure to include and distinguish clearly between (1) your summary of each other author’s key points, and (2) your own commentaries and further ideas in reaction to others’ ideas. The quality of your written summaries and commentaries will serve in place of a final exam. Strong advice: keep up with this as you go along, DO NOT leave it till the end of the semester! Having these notes done before each class will also strengthen your preparation for class participation, which is another important element of your grade, and avoid a major overload at the end of the semester.

Grades

Grades will be based approximately as follows: 15% class participation, 10% UNC group problem solution, 10% paper on the globalization debate, 15% paper on impacts of globalization on your home town, 10% oral presentation on research in progress, 20% final paper, 20% reading/discussion notes. Note that these grade percentages do not include some other assignments: all are required, but these other tasks will be considered as part of the general class participation grade. There will be no mid-term or final exams.

Course information and other materials

An updated syllabus (as needed) and other course materials will be available on UNC’s Blackboard web site (http://blackboard.unc.edu). This will include more detailed instructions for some of the assignments, an extensive (though by no means comprehensive) working bibliography of additional readings that you might find valuable, some useful web links (again, just a few starting points – don’t stop with these), and an email list of the class through which you can send messages either to the class as a group or to specific individuals. There is also an area where you can post assignments as requested to share with the rest of the class. Only class members have access to this site.

As soon as possible, visit the Blackboard web site, get familiar with it, and download an electronic copy of this syllabus to your own computer – that way you can use the hotlinks in it to go directly to many of the readings.

Readings

There is just one small book to buy (right away, since we will be using it for the first assignment):


It should be available at Student Stores. Because we will be reading most of it and it is inexpensive, you may also want to purchase your own copy of the following book for convenience’s sake:

All other assigned readings will be on reserve (mostly electronic) at the library, or on the course web site (http://www.blackboard.edu), or accessible on the Internet through hot links on the syllabus. There is no other single textbook to purchase: this is a seminar, in which we will explore many different sources of information and points of view rather than a single pre-packaged one.

All readings on electronic reserve can be accessed through the UNC Library web site. Go to http://www.lib.unc.edu/ and click on “course reserves,” then on “search for electronic course reserves.” You may then be asked to log on using your PID number (on your UNC ONE Card), then “Search Electronic Reserves,” then search for the specific course either by course number or under the alphabetical listing for the instructor’s name. Let me know by email if you have any difficulty accessing them. I encourage you to download them to your computer so you can read them at your convenience, and you can also print those you want to mark up. (After the first time, you may be able to bypass some of these steps by bookmarking the “search electronic reserves” page on your web browser, rather than starting with the library’s main home page each time).

We will explore a wide range of readings in this course, in part to help you pick out the key arguments and their factual premises rather than to expect you to memorize every detail of a smaller number of readings.

Documenting source materials and avoiding plagiarism

It is very important that you develop good habits of documenting the sources of both factual statements and the ideas, opinions, and arguments of other people that you use in any paper you write.

One basic reason for this is to be able to support the statements you make and the facts you use, both for your own future use and if anyone else should question or disagree with them. A second is to distinguish clearly between someone else’s ideas and arguments and your own, and not confuse the two. And a third is to protect your own integrity against either deliberate or accidental representation of someone else’s ideas or work as your own, which if intentional is known as plagiarism and is a serious violation of the UNC Honor Code and of the standards of ethical writing.

Please read the handouts “Avoiding plagiarism” and “Citing sources,” available on the Blackboard course web site, for more detailed suggestions on this subject.

In addition, for excellent discussions of criteria for evaluation of the quality of source materials in print or on Internet web sites, read the two handouts on “Evaluating evidence” (print and on-line sources respectively) that are available on the Blackboard web site. For excellent handouts on many other aspects of good writing practices, see http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/.
Summary schedule

August 30 Introductory session: personal introductions, course outline and expectations, first task assignment and partners
September 1 Where do the things we buy come from, and why? (1) Examples
September 6 Where do things come from, and why? (team presentations due)
September 8 The Nike case (1): Background on the controversy.
September 13 The Nike case (2): UNC’s Labor Code for Logo Licensees
September 15 The Nike case (3): What Should UNC Do About Code Violators? (group paper due)
September 20 Child labor
September 20 Special session: “Stolen Childhoods” (documentary film showing), 7:00 p.m., Carolina Union Auditorium
September 21 Special session: Frank Porter Graham Lecture, “Stolen Childhoods,” by filmmakers Len Morris and Robin Romano, 7:30 p.m., UNC Memorial Auditorium
September 22 Regular class: discussion with filmmakers Len Morris and Robin Romano
September 27 Globalization: what is it, and what forces are driving it?
September 29 Globalization and its consequences: arguments for and against global trade liberalization. (paper due)
October 4 Globalization’s impacts on North Carolina
October 6 Globalization and your home town: preparatory discussion
October 11 Globalization and work: are bad jobs better than no jobs (and is that the right question)?
October 13 Globalization and China: Industrial Progress or Exploitation, or Both?
October 18 Globalization and the environment: “race to the bottom,” or to improve?
October 20 No class (fall break)
October 25 Impacts of globalization on your home town (1)
October 27 Impacts of globalization on your home town (2) (paper due)
November 1 Influencing Globalization and Its Impacts (1): The World Trade Organization (proposed research paper topic due)
November 3 Influencing Globalization and Its Impacts (2): Trade Treaties and the Environment
November 8 Regional Trade Agreements. Cases: NAFTA and CAFTA
November 10 Film: selections from documentary film The Corporation, and discussion of them.
November 15 Solutions: Corporate Social Responsibility?
November 17 Solutions: business codes of conduct, consumer/investor activism?
November 22 Public policy solutions: regulation, incentives, other options? International, national, or state/local?
November 24 No class (Thanksgiving)
November 29 Student presentations: research papers in progress (oral presentation due)
December 1 Student presentations: research papers in progress (oral presentation due)
December 6 Student presentations: research papers in progress (oral presentation due)
December 8 Last class and final discussion (final papers and reading/class notes due).
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SYLLABUS
(as of August 25, 2005)

August 30 Introductory session: personal introductions, course outline and expectations, first task assignment and partners

Assignment (due September 6, next Tuesday). Read the readings from Stuff, then go to a store with a partner, pick a product other than those featured in the reading, and check the tag to see where it was made. Then develop a list together of all the elements you can think of — materials, energy, manufacturing processes, labor, transport, marketing, and so on — that went into making it and getting it to you, and where they might have taken place. Consider also the discussion questions below.

September 1 Where do the things we buy come from, and why? (1) Examples

Ryan, John C. and Alan T. Durning. 1997. Stuff: The Secret Lives of Everyday Things. Seattle, WA: Northwest Environment Watch. Read the Prologue (pp. 4-6); sections on Coffee (7-12), T-shirt (20-25), and Shoes (26-32); and the Conclusion (67-71).


- Discussion: Where do each of these three products “come from?” Diagram the key steps in the chain of production and marketing for each one, and in what country each one occurs (bring diagrams to class). How are these chains similar and different across the three products, and why might these differences occur?

What environmental impacts does the production of each of these three products have? What impacts on workers? On the communities where each step takes place?

What does it mean to say that a product is “made” in the country on the label? What are the key elements of the FTC definition of national origin? (list these and bring to class).

What ethical and value questions do these production chains raise that should be considered? What public policy issues?
September 6  Where do things come from, and why?
- Discussion: Assignment due. Share and discuss your examples of where things come from, and their impacts along the way. How are the answers for your product similar to and different from those for the products we discussed last time, and for each other’s?

September 8  The Nike case (1): Background on the controversy.
Bring notes to class on the key points of similarities and differences among the authors’ accounts of Nike’s labor practices. What might account for the differences, and what questions would you ask if you could talk with each author in order to make up your mind about your own opinion of Nike’s practices?


Manning, Jeff. 1997. Nike: Tracks Across the Globe, Huge Subcontractors, Vietnam Open Door to Problems, Modern Veneer, Nike Battles Back, Nike Steps Into Political Minefield, To Large Corporations. The Oregonian, November 9-11, 1997. On Blackboard as single set; individual articles also on e-reserve (CTRL-F and FIND Manning). (This was the series which best described the major public controversy over Nike’s labor practices that emerged in the mid-1990s and sparked protests at UNC)


Connor, Timothy. 2002. We Are Not Machines: Indonesian Nike and Adidas Workers. Ottawa, Canada & Victoria, Australia: Oxfam. Read the Executive Summary, Introduction, and Conclusion (pp. 4-7, 31-33, Adobe page numbers); skim the rest for examples of specific issues and working conditions. On line at http://www.maquilasolidarity.org/campaigns/nike/pdf/Wearenotmachines.pdf (Note: This report by a labor- and human-rights advocacy coalition provides a recent update on working conditions in the export sneaker factories in Indonesia)

(Optional) Also take a look at two key sets of pages on Nike’s corporate responsibility website:
http://www.nike.com/nikebiz/nikebiz_jhtml?page=25 (manufacturing practices),
http://www.nike.com/nikebiz/nikebiz_jhtml?page=27 (environment)

Discussion: Why is Nike producing sneakers and sports clothing for U.S. customers in Asia and Latin America, rather than in the U.S. where they could “buy American” and support U.S. jobs? Why has Nike kept shifting its production contracts from Japan to Korea and Taiwan, then to Indonesia and Vietnam and Latin America (and now, increasingly, to China?)

What are the main concerns that the film and the Connor report raise about Nike’s business practices, and how well do Nike and its supporters answer these concerns?

Are there any biases or one-sided issues in the film that we should note? (Note: Mr. Derek Lochbaum, new director of logo licensing at UNC, will join us for the next several classes).

September 13 The Nike case (2): UNC’s Labor Code for Logo Licensees

Bring notes to class on your arguments both for and against UNC and consumers imposing a labor code on (1) logo licensees and (2) vendors.


Discussion: Why do Nike and other UNC suppliers have their products made in the places they do?

What implications do a corporation’s manufacturing, labor, and environmental practices have for us as a university and as individual consumers? Do you agree with Shue that consumers have responsibilities for the conditions under which their products are made, from which they benefit in lower prices?

Should UNC care enough to impose and enforce a code of conduct for their labor practices? Should its faculty and students care enough to demand such
requirements, or leave it to the market? If so, should UNC impose such requirements not only on its logo licensees, but also on its vendors (that is, companies from which it procures products as a consumer, such as paper, food, textbooks, computers, etc.)

**Written Assignment: What Should UNC Do? (due Thursday, September 15).** Discuss the PT Dada case with your group (groups to be assigned), and prepare a 2-3 page paper to hand in by the group, stating and explaining your group’s recommendations as to what UNC should do in this case, and why. If there is not a consensus in your group, you may turn in a group report summarizing what points you did and did not agree on, plus brief individual minority reports explaining your position. Come to class prepared to discuss your recommendations and the reasons for them.

September 15 The Nike case (3): What Should UNC Do About Code Violators?


- Small group recommendations and discussion: What should UNC do about the PT Dada factory? [written assignment due from each group, on case study; oral presentations by each group, and discussion]

September 20 Child labor

U.S. Department of Labor. Bureau of International Labor Affairs. 1994. Executive Summary and Overview. *By the Sweat and Toil of Children*. Report to Congress, Vol. I, pp. 1-20; read also case examples of at least 2 countries, such as Brazil (pp. 30-35), Colombia (41-47), India (pp. 60-75), and Thailand (pp. 125-132). http://www.dol.gov/ilab/media/reports/iclp/sweat/sweat.pdf (*For further information see also five subsequent volumes*).


Question: Has the United States ratified this basic international agreement on this subject? If not, why not? See http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/appl-byConvYear.cfm?hdroff=1&Lang=EN&conv=C138


Discussion: Who is a “child,” and what restrictions (if any) should be imposed on participation by children in the commercial workforce? How old should children have to be in order to work? Should this question be answered differently in different societies? In different economic or cultural circumstances? For different kinds of jobs? How much control should international agencies, multinational corporations, consumers, and governments of countries like the U.S. exert on these issues in other countries?

Important: What are the key questions you would want to direct to journalists, public policymakers, or other experts on the issues associated with child labor in the global economy today?

September 20 Special session: “Stolen Childhodves” (documentary film showing), 7:00 p.m., Carolina Union Auditorium

September 21 Special session: Frank Porter Graham Lecture, “Stolen Childhodves,” by filmmakers Len Morris and Robin Romano, 7:30 p.m., UNC Memorial Auditorium

September 22 Class discussion with filmmakers Len Morris and Robin Romano

Come prepared to engage them on the issues of child labor and how economic globalization impacts both the problem and potential solutions to it.
Assignment: Information Sources (due September 27). Complete the UNC Library on-line Library Research Tutorial at http://www.lib.unc.edu/instruct/tutorial/ and turn in a copy of the certificate documenting your successful completion of the quiz at the end of it. (Also read)

September 27 Globalization: what is it, and what forces are driving it?

Bring notes to class on key points made by each author, and your own initial answers to the discussion questions below.


- Discussion: The readings for this session provide varied perspectives on what globalization is, what is important about it, and what is new and not new about the current process.

What is “globalization,” and why is it happening? What are the key forces that are encouraging it in the current era (economic forces? political, and public policies? technological? others?)?

What characteristics of the current economic globalization process are different from periods of increasing globalization in the past?

What is the connection between the globalization of trade, manufacturing, and marketing, and the globalization of finance capital? What are the most important economic, social, and environmental consequences of these globalizing trends?

Are there other aspects of economic globalization not mentioned in detail by these authors that we should consider important? For instance, would you include rising world oil prices as an impact of economic globalization? How about the increasing presence and role of Hispanic (and other) immigrants in North Carolina and other states? Or the recycling industry, which sends products with high toxic content (electronics, for instance) back to countries like China for low-skill, poorly-regulated disassembly? Other aspects?

September 29 Globalization and its consequences: arguments for and against global trade liberalization. Bring notes to class on the key arguments for and against global trade liberalization, and your own critical assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments in each reading.


- Discussion: What are the principal arguments offered in favor of economic globalization by its advocates? What are the principal criticisms offered by those critical of it, and how might a pro-trade advocate respond to them?
  On what points about globalization do the authors agree and disagree?
  Which arguments do you find most credible, and what reasons can you give for your judgment?
  What lessons would you draw from this debate? and given those lessons, what policies and other actions – by governments, businesses, and citizens such as yourself – do you think would be appropriate?
Written assignment: Summarize and compare the principal arguments for and against globalization, and what conclusions you draw from this debate and why. Due Tuesday, October 4; target length approximately five pages. This paper should not simply summarize the previous class discussion, but should present your own best written assessment of this debate based on your understanding of the readings (and any others you wish to cite) and points discussed in class. Be sure to cite references whenever you are referring to someone else’s ideas, and to cite references correctly (author-date system and reference list recommended).

October 4     Globalization’s impacts on North Carolina

Bring to class your own initial list of globalization’s apparent and possible impacts on North Carolina.


- Discussion: What have been the most important impacts of globalization on North Carolina, both positive and negative? Are they typical of impacts in other states and communities also?
   All these readings focus mainly on globalization’s employment effects; what impacts may it also have on communities and on the environment?
   What public policies should state and local governments consider to respond to these trends and their impacts?

Written assignment: impacts of globalization on your home community (oral presentations due October 25 and 27, written paper October 27, week after Fall Break). Either in person or by telephone, interview an older relative, teacher, or other knowledgeable person who has lived in your home town for at least a decade. Ask them at least three questions (modified in your own words, and with your own follow-up questions as you find useful): (1) what were the most important changes that have happened in your town over the past decade, (2) what role (if any) has globalization played in causing or contributing to these changes, and (3) what positive and negative impacts have resulted. Then write a paper of about 5 pages describing what you learned from your informant, and your own perspective on the information and the interview. Start on this assignment now (don’t wait till the last minute). Also see separate detailed instruction sheet on the Blackboard class web site.

October 6 Globalization and your home town: preparatory discussion
Bring to class a draft list of the questions you would ask when interviewing an adult from your home town about the effects of globalization on that community.

- Discussion and interview preparation (see more detailed instructions on Blackboard site): If you were to ask someone how your community – or another community that you know well – had changed over the past ten years, what would you think of? What would you look for? What kinds of changes are important to a community? Changes in businesses, in jobs, in overall economic growth or decline? In its appearance, or in the locations and ownership of its businesses? Changes in the community’s population, either increasing or decreasing, in their incomes and wealth, in what mix of people are there, and in how they are supporting themselves? Changes in the quality of schools and other public services? Others?
What kinds of impacts would you expect economic globalization to be having on these sorts of changes in American communities, such as your own? How would globalization influence them?

And what forces other than globalization might also be causing or contributing to these changes? Corporate restructuring, mergers and acquisitions, “downsizing,” computerization and robotization and info technology, others? Competition from other states or local governments within the United States? Are these part of globalization, or separate from it?

Finally, how would you explain to such a person what you are asking them about so that they could give you good answers and examples? [In class you will be asked to interview each other on these sorts of questions, as practice.] How would you introduce yourself and your request for information? What initial explanation would you provide about how you are defining globalization and what kinds of information you are seeking? How would you frame your main questions, and what would you use as more detailed “prompts” (to clarify if they don’t immediately understand your initial questions) and follow-up questions (to get more details)? How would you avoid “leading questions,” to be sure you are getting their perceptions and information and judgments and not merely a reflection of your own? And how would you keep clear distinctions between their answers and your own judgments in summarizing and reporting the results?

October 11 Globalization and work: are bad jobs better than no jobs (and is that the right question)?

Bring notes to class on your own reactions to these readings and answer to the question above. The first two readings present background information on “sweatshops,” generally and in U.S. history; the third presents descriptions of some working conditions in today’s global economy; then for class discussion, focus on comparing the arguments of Krugman and Miller.


(Optional, for additional background on widely accepted global principles).

(Optional, for additional background on widely accepted global principles).
International Labor Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work: (go to this link, then click on “text of declaration” at upper right http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/decl/declaration/text/index.htm (accessed July 22, 2005). (Optional: see also the “Background” and “History” tabs on the “Text of Declaration” home page)

- Debate and discussion: Are bad jobs better than no jobs, as Krugman argues? Is that the right question – and if not, how would you reframe it?
  Do people have a right to protection against workplace hazards, or a right to accept hazardous jobs if they prefer the income from them? What requirements (if any) should be imposed to assure minimum acceptable standards of working conditions worldwide? Are these universal principles, or would you make exceptions for some groups (for instance people in poor countries, or women of childbearing age, or children)?
  If you were to visit a factory (or a farm, or other workplace), how could you tell whether it was a “sweatshop” or simply a very efficient production unit? How might you be able to recognize the difference?

October 13 Globalization and China: Industrial Progress or Exploitation, or Both?


American Historical Review, vol. 91, no. 2, pp. 245-287. (Note: This article by three UNC historians provides an excellent historical comparison to labor conditions in North Carolina’s textile industry during its growth period, similar in some respects to China and other industrializing third-world countries today).


Is manufacturing for export to multinational corporations improving the lives of workers in China, or exploiting them? Are such companies (and China’s government) competing fairly by exploiting China’s comparative advantage in low labor costs, or are they taking good jobs away from places like North Carolina by exploiting working conditions that would not be permitted in the United States?

Many of the workers in the new export-oriented industries in China (and in other countries) are young women. Does this phenomenon represent exploitation or opportunity for them? Why? What issues and impacts does it raise for societies like China in which it occurs, for the businesses that employ them, and for public policy both in those societies and in the United States?

October 18 Globalization and the environment: “race to the bottom,” or to improve?
Bring notes to class on the reasons why you would expect economic globalization to cause (1) a “race to the bottom” in environmental and labor practices, and/or (2) a “California effect” or “race to the top” creating pressures for worldwide improvements in these practices.


Daly, Herman. 1993. The Perils of Free Trade. Scientific American, November 1993, pp. 50-57. (Note: Daly is a former senior economist with the World Bank, as well as one of the fathers of the “ecological economics” literature)

- Discussion: What are the reasons for expecting economic globalization to produce a “race to the bottom” in environmental and labor practices, and what does this term mean? What reasons would produce other outcomes, such as a use of environmental and labor standards for protectionism or even pressures to improve environmental and labor practices worldwide?
Can you think of examples of each of these outcomes? Which of these outcomes would you expect to be most likely, and in what kinds of countries?

Case study or special case? The global oil industry (and mining, logging, others?):


Discussion: What are the impacts of oil development on communities of indigenous peoples and their natural environment?

What is the economic and legal context under which Ecuador's ecologically diverse rainforest is being exploited for petroleum?

How do indigenous communities interact with oil companies, and with the market economy in general? What are the implications for cultural viability and biodiversity conservation?

What other global industries would you expect to be most problematic for their environmental impacts, and to what extent are these the same or different from those that have been the subject of concerns for labor issues?

October 20  No class (fall break)

October 25  Impacts of globalization on your home town (1)

Discussion: Come prepared to discuss and compare your interview findings in class on impacts of globalization on your own home town (written assignment due
Thursday. Also post a copy on the class’s Blackboard web site for other class members to read.

October 27  Impacts of globalization on your home town (2)

Discussion: finish presentations on globalization impacts on your home towns, and turn in written versions; discuss overall lessons, and local and state-level strategies for coping with and taking advantage of globalization.

ASSIGNMENT: Research and write a paper on an example of the impacts of globalization on the environment, workers and/or communities that particularly interests you, and possible solutions for managing these impacts. The paper should be 10-15 pages long, and should include both factual information about the issue and your own exploration of possible strategies for influencing these impacts for the better. It should also document carefully all information sources you have used (see guidance on citing sources, on Blackboard), and should include a bibliography of the information sources you have used.

A one-page topic statement is due by November 1, including your initial ideas on information sources; each student is also encouraged to schedule an individual discussion with the instructor during the following week to discuss the paper’s focus, research strategies, and initial working bibliography of potential sources of information.

Oral presentations of your research in progress are due November 29, December 1 or December 6 (five students each session, specific assigned dates TBA). Each presentation should be timed to present key highlights in no more than 8 minutes (~3 Powerpoint slides), followed by questions and suggestions from the class. Don’t try to cram everything into this presentation: focus on brief explanation of topic, your key findings, and issues on which you would most like to invite discussion or suggestions from the class.

Final papers are due on December 8 (last class). See Blackboard site for instructions, including a list of initial suggestions of possible topics for such papers (topics need not be limited to this list).
November 1  Influencing Globalization and Its Impacts (1): The World Trade Organization


- Discussion: What are the most important policy principles and organizational elements of today’s global trading system, and specifically of the World Trade Organization (WTO)? Why did United States government leaders and others agree on these principles and organizations, and why did they believe that “trade liberalization” was a good idea? What are the strongest arguments Gilpin and Oatley offer in support of this system? Can you see any weaknesses or unresolved issues in these arguments?

How does the WTO work, and how do its provisions and dispute-resolution procedures affect issues such as the environmental impacts of trade?

November 3  Influencing Globalization and Its Impacts (2): Trade Treaties and the Environment


- Debate/discussion:
  What have been the overall effects of the GATT and WTO on environmental protection, both positive and negative, and why?
  How should trade treaties be changed, if at all, to adequately protect the environment? Should WTO be required to develop specific environmental staff competence itself, or to defer to environmental treaties in cases of conflict, or neither?
  What are the implications for environmental policy of the GATT decision in the tuna-dolphin case? of the WTO’s decision in the shrimp-turtle case? Are these appropriate decisions, on balance, or problematic precedents for environmental protection policies?
  Overall, what can we say from these cases about the implications of current trade policies and dispute-settlement procedures for environmental protection?

November 8 Regional Trade Agreements. Cases: NAFTA and CAFTA


See CAFTA-related web sites:


- Discussion: What have been the impacts of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on the environment in Mexico? In the U.S.? What about on labor and communities in Mexico and the U.S.?

  Should the U.S. Congress have ratified the recent Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA)? How is it similar to and different from the North American FTA (NAFTA), in substance and in its potential effects? What would you expect to be its principal impacts on jobs, working conditions, and communities in the U.S.? In Central America? on the environment?

November 10 Film: selections from documentary film *The Corporation* (sections 2-7 and 21), and discussion of them.

We have looked at international and regional trade agreements as possible policy tools for managing the impacts of economic globalization on working conditions, communities, and the environment. We turn now to considering other ways of influencing these impacts, focusing on the ways in which business corporations themselves make decisions, and the roles of their managers as well as workers, customers, investors, communities, citizen activists, and other stakeholders in shaping their behavior.


Corporations as “persons” rather than “artificial entities.” The documentary uses the US Constitution’s 14th Amendment as its springboard, which prevents states from depriving “any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.” This constitutional amendment was intended to guarantee the rights of people recently freed from slavery to citizenship. In 1886 the US Supreme Court interpreted the amendment to guarantee the rights of corporations. According to the film, what problems stem from this interpretation of the Constitution? What problems flow from the kind of “personality” the law imbues in the corporate person?
What are the key attributes of a person? How is a corporation like or unlike a person? How does the status of the corporation as a legally recognized “person” correspond with other elements of corporations’ rights and responsibilities?

Corporations as “externalizing machines.” One of the fundamental messages in the film is that corporations are irresponsible because in an attempt to satisfy corporate goals, everyone else is put at risk: they are by their fundamental and legal nature “externalizing machines,” in ways that for individual persons would be considered psychopathic. How does the notion of “externalities” relate to the ethical status of the corporation as a “Person”?

Summarize three examples the film uses to make this claim, and discuss their pros and cons. Are these problems distinctively caused by corporations, or by businesses more generally? What can be done to prevent them: should we expect social responsibility or moral behavior by corporations and other businesses, or by their individual executives and managers, or must we invoke the powers of government to regulate and enforce them? What can be done to prepare managers and leaders to think about these issues?

Milton Friedman states that “asking corporations to be moral makes no more sense than asking a building to be...it’s the people in the corporations who have moral responsibilities,” while Sam Gibara of Goodyear states that even as a CEO one does things one wouldn’t otherwise and would prefer not to. What does the documentary show happens to moral reasoning and moral autonomy when individuals exist within larger institutions such as a corporation? Is a person morally culpable for their actions when within such an institution? Why or why not?

According to individuals interviewed in The Corporation, the problem is with the corporations themselves, not necessarily with the people who run them. What evidence does the film use to make this point? Do you agree or disagree? Explain using examples from the film and your course readings.

**Corporate Social Responsibility:** The documentary suggests that government regulation of corporations is a better approach to corporate power than relying on “corporate responsibility.” Economist Milton Friedman suggests in the film that social responsibility is not corporations’ area of expertise, nor is it democratic for them to decide. Why do you (or don’t you) think the corporate social responsibility approach is so limited?

**November 15 Solutions: business decision-making, corporate social responsibility?**

*Bring notes to class on the strengths and limitations of corporate social responsibility as a corrective for environmental, social and community impacts of business practices.*

Friedman, Milton S. 1970. The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profits. *New York Times Magazine*, September 13, 1970. *(Note: This is the full text of the Friedman argument that is mentioned in the Derber reading)*


- Debate/discussion: What social responsibility do businesses have for the environment, labor, and communities, if any, other than to make a profit for their shareholders?
  
  *Is it plausible that corporate social responsibility, or “enlightened corporate self-interest” – either by individual corporations and businesses, or by business associations such as the World Business Council for Sustainable Development or trade associations – may provide solutions to negative impacts on environmental and labor? Depending on your answer, what public policies might best promote these outcomes?*

November 17 Solutions: business codes of conduct, consumer/investor activism?


- Discussion: What are the strengths and limitations of private-sector “voluntary self-regulation,” such as business codes of conduct and certification programs, as possible solutions to the human and environmental problems that can arise in global trade?

Examples (read at least two, skim others as interested):


Business codes of conduct: http://www.codesofconduct.org/

November 22 Public policy solutions: regulation, incentives, other options?
International, national, or state/local?


-Discussion: What role(s) should governments play in managing the impacts of economic globalization on workers, communities, and the environment? What do you think would be “good” public policies for encouraging the positive and minimizing the negative effects of these processes? Policies at the international, national, and sub-national levels?

November 24  No class (Thanksgiving)

November 29  Student presentations: research papers in progress

December 1  Student presentations: research papers in progress

December 6  Student presentations: research papers in progress

December 8  Last class, final discussion, final papers and reading/class notes due.