

Carla Freeman  
Piedmont report  
August 18, 2003

The Piedmont Project 2003 was for me a marvelous opportunity to reach outside the familiar and think anew about my favorite undergraduate course, Globalization and Transnational Culture, and about teaching and the role of our environmental context more generally. My original proposal was to incorporate two specific topics into the existing course: ecotourism and the environmental impact of transnational industries on the Mexican border. To that end, I have collected some useful references, and have decided to add some new student-led projects to the course geared toward up-to-date web research on, for instance, eco-tourism efforts in Belize and Guyana; border ecology in Juarez, etc. I have incorporated some useful new readings on Mexico (Pena), and the transnational environmental movement (Sklair), as well as on eco-tourism in the Caribbean (Pattullo) to weave environmental issues into the existing content of the course. Further, in the unit on Consumption, I plan to experiment with a new assignment in which students will keep consumption journals to reflect upon aspects of their own participation in global systems as they read critical analyses of the relationships between production, consumption and marketing.

More broadly, Piedmont prompted me to think more deeply about what we mean by "environment" and its multiple dimensions--not just matters of air, water, and other forms of "pollution", but the natural and built worlds we inhabit and transform. For instance, Tong Soon's wonderful presentation about Singapore and the contested soundscape of the Muslim call to prayer, has prompted me to think more about how changing and intensifying patterns of globalization make such clashes more frequent, and more in need of analysis. I plan to ask him to participate in a class discussion/presentation of sound/music and globalization along such lines. Undoubtedly, as the semester progresses, I will encounter many more instances in which the environment will creep in, as part of the "hidden curriculum" and my own broadening sense of globalization and its relationship to "local" spaces and our sense of "place". I have noticed "environmental" aspects of some of the fictional texts I have long used in teaching, that I never thought to examine before. And now, as I construct my Caribbean Cultures course, I find myself drawn to a deeper focus on landscapes, seascapes, and an engagement with the environment that, again, I have not previously had. Thank you for a stimulating and enriching learning opportunity! I look forward to continued conversations along many of these lines.

**Global and Transnational Culture**  
**Anthro 352SWR / Women's Studies 342SWR**  
T/Th 1-2:15 Woodruff 874

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Fall 2003  
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Globalization has been a much debated phenomenon over the past decade, prompting some enthusiasts to proclaim the rapid spread of information, culture, and resources in a "borderless" world, and others to decry the homogenization or "Americanization" of the globe. While massive migratory movements and extensive transnational trade routes have been a part of human history for centuries, the particular forms and sheer scale of contemporary patterns of globalization are arguably distinctive. Electronic highways, low-cost jet travel, and trade liberalization have made transnational communication and cultural, political, and economic connections closer and faster than ever before. The changing shape of these patterns of movement, also calls for new methodological approaches to capture their complexity. This course explores the changing shape of such global patterns of production, consumption, and meaning-making, and examines their relationship to local cultural practices and communities. As a course that specifically engages an anthropological perspective on globalization, we will utilize the lens of culture and the tools of ethnography to analyze and interpret global production and consumption in today's world. We will attend to the particular experiences of women and men as subjects across the global arena--as producers in global factories and consumers of goods, media and culture in and across "first" and "third" worlds.

The course begins by discussing the historical underpinnings of today's globalization and transnational movements. We will explore the linkages between European colonialism and the contemporary post-colonial, "postmodern" world. Then we will map the ways in which current movements of people (tourists, migrants and others), consumer goods, capital, media, and cultural traditions have particular implications for women and men, and will end the seminar by querying the possibilities of a global feminism and environmentalism as "new social movements" that span a global arena.

Required Texts:

Mintz *Sweetness and Power*

Ritzer *The McDonaldization of Society*

Freeman *High Tech and High Heels in the Global Economy*

Salzinger *Genders In Production.*

Hirsch, Jennifer *A Courtship After Marriage.*

Sklair *Globalization: Capitalism and its Alternatives* (selected chapters)

Du Gay, Hall, et al., *Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman* (brief selections)

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### **Engaged Reading/Response Papers (2)**

There will be two short papers due during the semester. These will involve identifying the major themes of particular articles/texts, situating them within some broader context, exploring contradictions, debates, etc. raised by the authors at hand, and comparing them with other authors' arguments/research. You are encouraged to compare/contrast and critically engage the arguments and approaches of two or three of the readings in the course and to points made in class lectures, films, discussion etc. These should **not** be merely summary statements, anecdotal or personal responses, or traditional book 'reports'. They should reflect your "engaged" reading. Your papers

should attempt some analytical, thematic discussion by raising questions and drawing connections. These papers are due on days marked with an (\*) on the course outline. (40%)

### **Global Production & Consumption Group Research**

In the second half of the semester, seminar members will identify and research a particular commodity or movement and examine various aspects of its process of production, consumption, marketing and meaning making that involve dimensions of globalization (in the past, students have focused on GAP clothing, Starbucks Coffee, pharmaceuticals for the treatment of AIDS, diamonds, 'world music', etc. Students this semester might choose to research other commodities or globalizing phenomena and explore the political, economic, cultural dimensions of these processes). Each student will do her/his own research and written paper, while working collaboratively on a particular industry/commodity. Groups will present their work to the class and papers will be due at the conclusion of the semester. (40%)

### **Consumption Diaries**

During a one week period, students will keep a "consumption diary"--a notebook listing all purchases s/he makes and the social/emotional context in which they are made. These will be private journals through which you will explore some of the (often unconscious) patterns of our own consumption and situate these within a broader local and global context. The paper you write, inspired by your diary, should reflect upon your consumption habits in light of the readings and discussions we have addressed in class. See hand-out for detailed suggestions. (20%)

### **Class Participation**

Participation in class is essential to make our discussions work. The quality (not just quantity!) of your contributions to the seminar will be weighed into your overall performance. Weekly engagement and participation is expected. Mutual respect in a class is important-- some students find participating easier than others-- the idea is to encourage lively engagement with the readings/topics of the course.

\*\*\*\*\*NOTE ON WRITTEN WORK\*\*\*\*\*

All written assignments must be typed, double spaced, and submitted **on time**. In the event of serious illness or emergency, please contact me on Learnlink in advance of turning in late work and/or missing class. More than three absences will constitute a drop in grade.

As this course fulfills the College Writing Requirement, students are expected to take care with essay and paper writing: Organization and clarity of expression count; you are advised to review rough drafts with each other, with our TA, Ana, or myself, and to make use of the Writing Clinic if you need help with your writing. Papers will be graded on content, analytical insight/rigor, and execution (organization, spelling, and grammar). Give your papers a title that hints at the content/argument and entices the reader (creativity is a plus!).

A good paper poses a clear question or problem, and develops its points in a focused and concise manner (eg. what is this author driving at? what question is s/he trying to answer? how does her/his point of view and development of topic relate to others we're read?)

Please use a style manual for bibliographic format--which ever format you use, be consistent. In-notes for citations made within the text are recommended (author's last name, the date of publication and page number—Jones 2000:45) with full referenced provided in a final bibliography.

## COURSE OUTLINE

**(Aug. 28) Introduction to the Course and to Globalization, and to each other**

### **WEEK 1 (Sept 2, 4) Theorizing Globalization**

Read: Sklair *Globalization* ch's 1-3,  
Marchand and Runyan, *Introduction*. (online reserve)

### **WEEK 2 (Sept 9, 11) Historically Situating Global Production & Consumption**

Read: Mintz, *Sweetness and Power* (chs. 1-3)  
Library Session: Web research: Nexus/Lexus and more (Sept 11)

### **WEEK 3 (Sept 16, 18) Global Factories, National Development, Personal Dreams**

Conclude Mintz (ch's 4-5)  
Begin reading Salzinger: *Genders In Production* (ch's 1-4)  
*Film: The Global Assembly Line (60 mins) or Maquila* : a tale of two Mexicos / a film by Saul Landau

### **WEEK 4 (Sept 23, 25\*) Global Production and the Environment: the Mexican Border**

Conclude discussion of Salzinger (ch's 5-8)  
Thurs Read: Pena, chapters "Promised Land or Wasteland" and Marginality as Inventive Force" from "Terror of the Machine" (online reserve)  
The Gender, Justice, and the Border web site:  
<http://www.west.asu.edu/borderjustice/juarez/index.htm>

**WEEK 5 (\*Sept 30, Oct 2) Global Production and Relations of Consumption  
Sept. 30, Papers Due**

Read: Freeman *High Tech and High Heels in the Global Economy* (ch's 1-3, 4-6)  
nexus/lexus update on informatics? New call-centers in the Caribbean?  
**Student debate on global production and its meanings for workers.**

**WEEK 6 (Oct 7, 9) Consumption**

**Begin consumption diaries**

Read: du Gay *Doing Cultural Studies: The Case of the Sony Walkman* (1-40; 84-94 e-reserve)  
Sklair: in Globalization, "*The Culture-Ideology of Consumption*" (e-reserve pp 164-207)  
Juliet Schor "*Do Americans Shop Too Much?*" (e-reserve pp. 13-33; 57-87)

**WEEK 7 (October 14) Fall Break**

**(October 16) Global Music**

Read: Tong Soon Lee's "Technology and the Production of Islamic Space: The Call to Prayer in Singapore" (electronic reserve)  
Steven Feld's "A Sweet Lullaby for World Music" (electronic reserve)  
*Guest Presentation: Tong Soon Lee*

**WEEK 8 (Oct 21\*, 23) Consumption and Rationalization**

Read: Ritzer, *The McDonalidization of Society* (esp. chapters 1,2,7,9,10)  
Wilk, *Consumer Goods as Dialogue about Development* (electronic reserve)  
**Consumption Diaries and Papers Due Oct 21**

**WEEK 9 ( Oct 28, 30) Tourism as Global Industry and Quest for the 'Other'**

Read: Enloe *Bananas, Beaches and Bases* ch 2. "On the Beach : Sexism and Tourism"  
(online reserve)  
Polly Pattullo's *Last Resorts: The Cost of Tourism in the Caribbean*, chapters 2 "From Banana Farmer to Banana Daiquiri: Employment", 5 "Green Crime, Green Redemption: Environment and Eco-Tourism", 8 "Reclaiming the Heritage Trail: culture and identity"  
*Film: Cannibal Tours (selections) (Oct. 30)*

**WEEK 10 (Nov 4, 6) Transnational Migration: sex and marriage across the Mexican Border**

Read: Hirsch, Jennifer A *Courtship After Marriage: Sexuality and Love In Mexican Transnational Families*  
*Film: Transnational Fiesta (Nov. 4)*

**WEEK 11 (Nov 11, 13\*) Transnational and Other Borderlands**

**Conclude Courtship after Marriage; Guest presentation, Jennifer Hirsch (11<sup>th</sup>)**

Read: Chang and Lin "Globalization and Its Intimate Other: Filipina Domestic Workers In Hong Kong" In Marchand and Runyan, *Gender and Global Restructuring* (electronic reserve).

**3<sup>rd</sup> Short Paper Due Nov. 13**

**WEEK 12 (Nov 18, 20 ) Concluding Migration & Challenges to Globalization**

*Film: "Miss India Georgia"*

Read: Sklair, ch. 10 *Challenges to Capitalist Globalization*

**WEEK 13 (Nov 25, 27) Thanksgiving Holiday**  
**Project Preparation**

**WEEK 14 (Dec 2, 4) Group Project Presentations**

**WEEK 15 (Dec 9) Wrapping up and re-thinking Globalization**  
**Final Papers Due December 15<sup>th</sup>**

