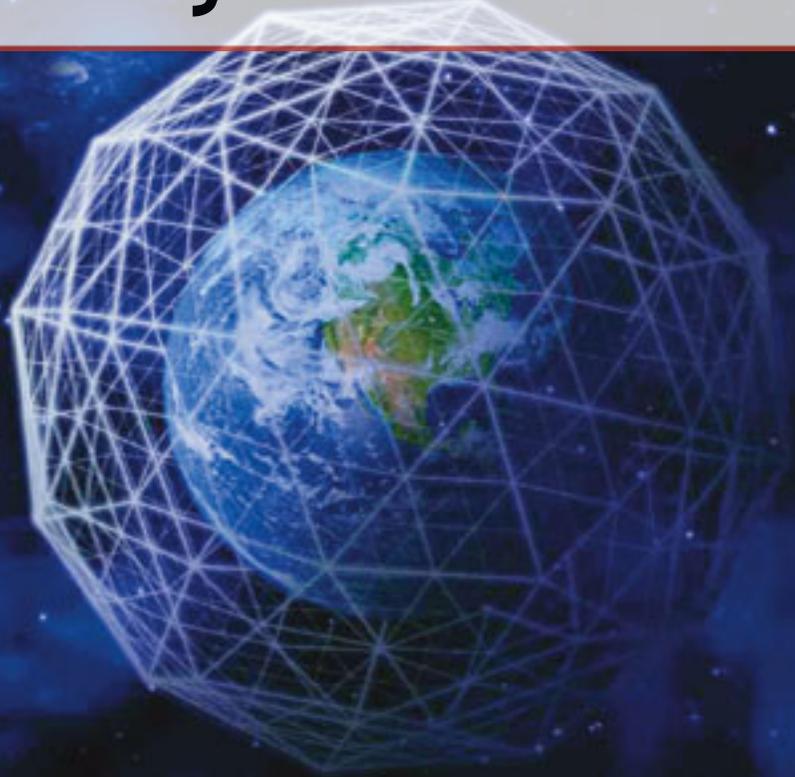# LEARNING IN THE GLOBAL ERA

International Perspectives on Globalization and Education

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FROM TEACHING GLOBALIZATION TO NURTURING GLOBAL CONSCIOUSNESS

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, scholarship on globalization and education has shed light on multiple ways to prepare youth to meet current challenges. It has examined the impact of immigration on children's cognitive, emotional, and linguistic development in migrant and receiving communities (C. Suárez-Orozco & M. Suárez-Orozco 1995, 2001; M. Suárez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard 2004; M. Suárez-Orozco, C. Suárez-Orozco, & Qin-Hilliard 2005). It has mapped the cognitive and socioemotional competencies at a premium in postindustrial market economies (Levy & Murnane 2004; OECD-PISA 2005). It has advanced educational policies to narrow the opportunity gap across nations. It has revealed the potential of information technologies to enhance cross-cultural learning (Battro 2004; Negroponte 2005; Turkle 2004; Rose 2005), redefined long-standing conceptions of "international education" and "cosmopolitanism," and assessed the impact of an "education abroad" (Fail, Thompson, & Walker 2004; Gunesch 2004).

Informed by these approaches, we explore a different means of preparing the young for our fast-changing times. Working in classrooms, we give students the opportunity to examine key forces shaping lives on the planet—for example, how the accelerated traffic of capital is transforming cultural values and economies in the developing world, and how cultural identities blend and collide as migrants respond to demographic,

economic, and cultural impulses. We argue that, to thrive in a globalized world, young people must understand key patterns and dilemmas facing our planet. Indeed, student learning about globalization should include more than the acquisition of knowledge about world history and cultures. Learning should be inspired by the goal of developing *global consciousness* —a mindful way of *being* in the world today.

Our observations stem from an empirical study in which twelve exemplary Massachusetts high-school teachers, with the support of peers and researchers in the study, designed model experimental units of instruction on globalization. Teachers were identified through a multiphase process: Faculty, school principals, and teacher leaders affiliated with research and development programs at the Harvard Graduate School of Education offered initial recommendations. Forty-five potential candidates were interviewed over the phone to yield a subset of twenty teachers whom we interviewed in person after classroom observation in order to select twelve.

Selection criteria included a demonstrated commitment to excellence in interdisciplinary teaching, a clear constructivist approach to instruction, diversity in the sample in terms of disciplinary background, a reflective stance toward teaching and learning, and willingness to attend a biweekly seminar and design experimental units of instruction. Ten of the teachers were or became teaching award recipients (e.g., Massachusetts teacher of the year, biology teacher of the year, Abbot Scholars award). Such awards did not inform our initial selection. The teachers served a variety of student populations in their schools. Five teachers worked in urban public schools, four in suburban public schools, two in a rural charter school, and one in a suburban public school. Seven teachers were male, and five female.

Close documentation of teacher-seminar discussions and classroom practice, supplemented with in-depth interviews and examination of selected student work, shed light on the dilemmas these educators confronted when teaching globalization, and on the need to reconceptualize the purpose of the enterprise as one of nurturing global consciousness. In what follows, we begin with a portrait of good practice in teaching globalization and an outline of the pedagogical challenges it presents. We then introduce the concept of global consciousness as a desirable long-term goal for contemporary education. In conclusion we discuss implications of an education for global consciousness and propose lines for further study.

UNDERSTANDING GLOBALIZATION:
SNAPSHOTS OF PRACTICE

For two years (2003–05) our research group at Harvard's Project Zero worked closely with twelve teachers representing a range of disciplines and serving various socioeconomic and ethnic communities. Collaboratively, we developed experimental units on globalization that were woven into teachers' regular courses and designed to expand students' learning by inviting them to examine our changing world. In a humanities course, a study of late-nineteenth-century immigration was extended to consider contemporary migration and the reshaping of cultural identities taking place in increasingly cosmopolitan cities. Students historicized their own experience of migration, borrowing insights from literature and anthropology to understand themselves and others in their largely immigrant community. In a science class, students moved beyond understanding why the climate is changing to considering local and global approaches to redistributing the indirect costs of greenhouse gas emissions. A course in dance reframed a focus on hip-hop and the use of Laban notation to spotlight an examination of transnational youth cultures. Students discussed the homogenization and localization forces at play when youth in Brazil, Japan, and the United States re-create movements and meaning in the dance. Similarly, a course in photography led students to explore how to create visual portraits that depict hybrid identities and ambient signs of globalization.

Michael K, a tenth-grade history teacher in a suburban public school, led a unit on the impact of outsourcing on developing countries. The idea for his unit emerged at an early seminar meeting in which teachers and researchers were assessing the value and viability of globalization as a focus of instruction. "Globalization is everywhere!" Michael pointed out. "It is changing our lives and the lives of our students in every way." Pointing to the label of a plastic orange juice bottle standing on the table, he read: "Orange juice concentrate from USA, Brazil, and Mexico. . . . Customer information 1-800- . . . website. . . . Se habla español."

Who picked the oranges for our juice? Michael passionately asked the seminar members. Under what working conditions and with what new opportunities? Who benefits from new patterns of trade production and consumption? Does knowing about Mexican farmers demand a new form of consumer responsibility? With these questions in mind, Michael prompted his students to investigate the transnational production of a familiar object of their choice (e.g., Apple iPods, Motorola cell phones,

Reebok sneakers, Fender guitars). Over six weeks, students investigated the impact (positive and negative) that job migration is having on job-receiving communities in Mexico, India, and China.

Group presentations provided a climactic ending to the unit. Before an audience charged with deciding whether the community should approve a new sneaker plant, each team presented the promise and the risk of building a new plant in the group's region. When the group that studied Reebok in the province of Guangdong took the floor, three students representing corporate interests sought to charm their audience with detailed descriptions of job opportunities, working conditions, and health standards. They emphasized the company's compliance with articles 4 and 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights—(banning slavery and maltreatment), as well as its voluntary compliance with European standards for greenhouse gas emissions. Preempting citizens' concerns, the corporate spokespersons spoke of the hardships of Chinese migrant workers facing shifting values in society, and introduced the company's programs to help them maintain mental and physical health.

A student representing an environmental NGO's perspective explained short- and long-term consequences of deforestation on nutrition cycles and the extinction risk for endangered species such as the giant panda and golden monkey. Another student was quick to denounce Reebok's labor violations in the early 1990s, including cases of child labor, compulsory overtime, and limited freedom of speech. Her critique, that corporate principles of conduct were not being enforced on the ground, met the energetic response of a student who outlined the measures taken by Reebok to prevent new violations. The latter student described monitoring procedures in detail and Reebok's labor standards, recognized by UNICEF, *Time* magazine, and the *Boston Globe* as corporate models. Members of the audience challenged presenters with questions about the prospects for small local businesses, long-distance relationships in families, inter-generational tensions, and the impact of urban development on rural China.

After deliberations, the class approved the construction of the new plant but requested that local authorities develop stricter monitoring procedures (e.g., surprise visits) to enforce compliance with labor standards. They proposed the involvement of independent monitors represented by NGOs. In a shift from several students' initial orientation, environmental degradation was a minor concern when considered in light of economic development and social mobility. In feedback to the class, Michael pointed out this change of heart.

Michael's unit placed his students at the center of globalization's core dilemma—the inescapable association between economic growth afforded by the transnationalization of production and the destabilization of social, cultural, and natural capital that puts social cohesion and sustainable development at risk. Students' assumptions were challenged: "I always kind of thought globalization was a good thing, a sharing of ideas, lowering boundaries," one student (Jenna) said halfway through the unit. "Something most of the world had in common. Everyone has a stake in [the] world economy. But it is much more complicated. The strong, like the U.S., can easily use the weak and manipulate them . . . for higher profit, without thinking about the person working hard for pennies. In part because the person working for pennies feels he got a great deal with a new job anyway! It's a catch-22 and it will *never* get better! . . . That's it."

Michael was pleased with students' grounded understanding of the promise and perils of off-shoring. Students addressed matters of economic growth, environmental survival, and cultural and social cohesion sensibly, employing concepts and modes of thinking novel to them—from considering indicators of the investment climate and a country's GDP, to interpreting data on social mobility and biodiversity. What was striking about this unit is how effectively it raised students' awareness of the global connections present in their daily lives. "They owned the problems that they studied in a deep way," Michael explained as he described the unit as being about today, about the products the students buy, the world in which they live, and ultimately about themselves as participants in such a world.

"I went right home, turned over all the dishes in my house, and found that they were all made in Malaysia. Pretty much everything in my house seems made in Malaysia!" commented one student, exhibiting a new sensitivity for transnational production and lamenting knowing "almost nothing" about the people who made the dishes on which she eats. Another student noticed that her father's latest issue of *Time* magazine had a special report on China's record economic development. "It was exciting —I was feeling like reading *Time* magazine cover to cover. I asked Dad if I could borrow the magazine . . . he was surprised and glad."

TEACHING GLOBALIZATION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

As Michael's example illustrates, teaching globalization places students at the center of contemporary debates—the immediacy of which they begin

to recognize in the products they purchase and the newsstands they walk past. Globalization is in the air, and by treating it explicitly as a phenomenon for exploration, students learn to recognize the symptoms of a changing planet. They reflect on their experiences outside of school with the aid of conceptual tools and perspectives that challenge or expand their initial commonsense intuitions. Teachers in our group recognized the opportunity to enhance the contemporary relevance of their curricula. Although exciting, designing quality instruction about globalization presented abundant pedagogical conundrums.

Finding Focus in a Ubiquitous Phenomenon

At multiple points, teachers' experience of globalization was complicated by its hyperconnectivity. As a member of the group put it, "It relates to all disciplines, all places, and all cultures . . . all sections of the *New York Times*." Identifying a feasible focus for instruction became teachers' first challenge. What about globalization, exactly, was worth teaching and why? The problem of finding a workable focus was exacerbated by teachers' partial and unsystematic understanding of globalization. Members of the group spoke past one another as different teachers emphasized distinct focal points: the post–Cold War zeitgeist, the decline of the nation-state, imperialism, McDonaldization, the Internet, migration, outsourcing, and so forth.

To support teachers' decisions about focus and offer a common ground for exchange, our group developed a conceptual map highlighting four core problem areas that embody globalization's central tensions and dilemmas for inquiry: *Economic integration* emphasized the opportunities and costs for economies, societies, cultures, and individuals associated with the flux of capital and production around the globe. (Michael's unit focused on this quadrant of our conceptual map.) *Environmental stewardship* concerned the state of the global environment (including global health) and what we can and should do to ensure its long-term sustainability and well-being. *Cultural encounters* focused on the forces of homogenization, hybridity, and localization that shape how nations, cultures, and smaller groups exchange ideas, people, and cultural products. *Governance and citizenship* referred to emerging tensions between national and supranational forms of government, as well as the extent to which individuals enjoy global rights and bear responsibilities as a function of their humanity.

Scholarly work on globalization in economics, anthropology, sociology, law, and philosophy informed our understanding of each problem area. By placing their unit designs primarily within one problem space, teachers were able to locate their interests and instructional emphasis in relation to those of others on a common conceptual landscape. They were also able in each unit to focus selectively on aspects of everyday experience (e.g., consumer products, migrant friends, hip-hop music).

Helping Students Understand Culture

Cultural globalization is a familiar experience for teachers and students alike, even though it is unrecognized as such. Visibly present in urban centers around the globe, Coca-Cola, McDonalds, Reebok, and Motorola billboards stand as reminders of the impulse toward cultural homogenization. Yet helping students understand how individuals in various cultural contexts make sense of these icons differently presented an unprecedented challenge for teachers.

The difficulty had multiple roots: Students were often anxious as they addressed issues of "culture." They tended either to minimize cultural differences or to feel paralyzed by the fear of producing politically incorrect accounts. Teachers felt anxious about helping students understand human experience in cultural contexts with which they were themselves unfamiliar. In their work, competing definitions of "culture"—often echoing debates in anthropology (Borofsky 1994)—led them to ponder whether we can we talk about a "Chinese culture," equating one culture with one society, seeking coherence across clearly dissimilar subsystems of beliefs. Conversely, can students understand the personal meaning-making act by which hip-hop dancers perform in the Brazilian *favelas* or workers punch their timecards at a Guangdong Reebok factory without placing the *favela* and the factory in a broader context—a more stable and cohesive set of beliefs and values? In watching their students learn, teachers also considered the degree to which intercultural understanding means *having information* about how others lead their lives and whether it should also require engaging affectively with others' experience. And if the latter is the case, is emotional engagement an illusion of understanding?

Fostering intercultural understanding presented visible difficulties to the teachers in our group; the solutions that we considered only partially addressed the issue. The more successful teachers often met the challenge

by leading students to wear an anthropologist's hat. For some, the cultural frameworks under study were visibly represented in students' immigrant communities. Teachers invited students to observe familiar phenomena—a family dinner, the photographs on display at a friend's house—in search of indicators of cultural affiliation and hybridity. Students interviewed migrant friends and neighbors, inquiring about the motivations, emotional trade-offs, and experiences of immigration and uncovering the meaning that family dinners or photographs had for them. While some students embraced the discovery of such an "interpretive approach" to familiar phenomena with excitement—often overusing their budding interpretive skills—others found the task daunting.

Teachers charged with helping students understand how individuals make sense of globalization in far-flung contexts (e.g., Guangdong, São Paulo, or Oaxaca) lacked occasions to engage students in palpable intercultural interactions. Hoping to advance textured understandings of these cultural actors' experiences, they supplemented information about social structure, cultural values, and practices with close analysis of regional films and works of literature. Our analysis of student work and interviews with students revealed the power of film and literature to inform students' cultural imagination. In some cases, it also revealed the risks of confusing fact and fiction.

Helping Students Construct Membership

In studying globalization, students often felt overwhelmed by the magnitude of the phenomenon under study, its ubiquity, and the human drama that characterizes a world where two-thirds of the population live on less than two dollars a day and where the rise in atmospheric temperature approaches a point of no return. Feeling unable to respond individually or locally in constructive ways, students were often inclined to defer responsibility for action to others (e.g., governments, the UN, other nations and cultures, the international criminal court). Teachers struggled to help students position themselves in a global matrix somewhere between disengagement and paralyzing overload. Jenna's aforementioned perception of the impact and process of outsourcing as a "catch-22" for which "nothing can be done" illustrates the point.

Responding to this challenge, teachers in our study chose to present concrete options for participation. A schoolwide exhibit of art addressing "inequality and the global supermarket" allowed students in one class to use art to make a statement "about the things we take for granted and

the people who make them." Another group studying global climate change sought ways to reduce energy consumption in daily life. Team members examined the possibility of lending home and school computer power to a group of global climate scientists in Britain who use distributed computing to make future climate projections (Bohannon 2005; www.climatepredictions.net). "Being part of it" was their reward. In a unit on human rights, students learned to post their thoughts on a public website—"making them visible to the world"—and to design memorials that invited visitors to remember past abuses and achieve reconciliation. The options that Michael's students generated ranged from contacting a corporate CEO to discussing the tensions between economic growth and working conditions, to revising their personal consumption patterns.

THE CONSCIOUSNESS TURN

Units of study like the ones here described present students with opportunities to examine a particular aspect of globalization in depth. Their instructional designs called on students to employ disciplinary concepts and modes of thinking to learn not only *that* Motorola's factories in India are transforming local economies but also *how* and *why* this transformation is taking place. Attending to key dimensions of analysis (e.g., corporate interests, economic growth, social-cultural cohesion, the environment), students used economics concepts to understand how incentives shape corporate behavior; alternatively, they borrowed methods from anthropology to explore how people in cultures other than their own perceive change. By offering a way of reasoning about outsourcing, Michael and his colleagues furnished students with interpretive frameworks with which to move beyond the particular case in question (e.g., Reebok in China) and ask informed questions when confronted with comparable phenomena (e.g., outsourcing in India).

Yet units like Michael's went beyond careful analysis of aspects of globalization, the deployment of disciplinary constructs, and the construction of complex explanations. By focusing on consumer products students hold dear and problematizing their roots in transnational production, Michael's unit drastically redrew the line that divides schoolwork from the work of life. It alerted students to a changing reality around them, sharpening their sensitivity for the ways the global economy is increasingly present locally. The unit engaged students affectively in a reflection about their role as key actors in a dynamic, often uneven matrix of economic and cultural

exchanges. In doing so, the unit challenged students to begin to place themselves (their individual life stories, their likes and dislikes) in a broader global context; they were stimulated to use this emerging sense of self to guide their commitments as consumers or to reinterpret their immigrant family history as part of a larger contemporary phenomenon.

We came to a key realization. Beyond its stated goal of advancing students' *understanding* of globalization, Michael's unit embodied a more ambitious, if tacit, aspiration: to nurture students' *global consciousness* —a disposition to place their immediate experience in the broader matrix of developments that shape life worldwide, to construct their identities as members of world societies, and at least in some instances, to orient their actions accordingly. Tacitly, our teachers sought to prepare students to be reflective agents and actors—citizens of today and tomorrow. But what is consciousness? How can global consciousness best be defined? How can such a private phenomenon be made visible in contemporary classrooms?

THE PROBLEM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Conceived as a capacity that defines us as a species, consciousness has captured the inquisitive imagination of scholars in philosophy, psychology, history, and neurobiology alike (Damasio 1999; Dennet 1991, Rüssen 2004; Seixas 2004, Wineburg 2001). Neuroscientist Antonio Damasio describes the higher order of human consciousness as a complex mental capacity that enables the construction of an autobiographical self.[1] In Damasio's view, such capacity develops throughout our lifespan as we encounter objects and experiences in our environment such as another person, a melody, a toothache, or a state of bliss. We generate mental representations of these objects and rearrange them in the form of conceptual frameworks that organize what we know. We also record our experience of such encounters—the feeling of them. In doing so, we become increasingly aware of the relationship between these objects and our self—coming to understand ourselves, autobiographically, as knowers, feelers, and actors in interaction with our environment (e.g., our likes and dislikes, how we tend to experience an opera, how we tend to engage in relationships). This autobiographical consciousness serves as a compass to orient our future engagements by making knowledge about ourselves available when we confront novel objects or situations. Consciousness, Damasio summarizes, "places the person at a point in indi-

vidual historical time richly aware of the lived past and of the anticipated future and keenly cognizant of the world beside it."

Clearly a private mind-brain enterprise, consciousness could be seen in Michael's class as Jenna commented on her "changing mind" about the promise of globalization, or as another student described herself as feeling anxious about learning macroeconomics. In both cases, perceptions of self learned over time and engraved in the student's mind/brain, informed the ways students confronted a new example of globalization or engaged in a lesson on foreign investment.

While Damasio examines the foundations of consciousness at the individual neuropsychological level, the budding field of *historical consciousness* places this capacity beyond the scope of the individual lifespan. This historical perspective focuses on how our representation of a past unfolding before our birth informs our knowledge of self in the present and orients us toward the future. Scholars in this field do not look into the brain to build biopsychological accounts of this phenomenon. Rather, they describe consciousness using units of analysis that stem from history (historical time, historical actors); the philosophy of history (memory, narrative structure); and psychology (mental representation and identity). As expressed by philosopher Jörn Rüssen: "History is the mirror of past actuality into which the present peers in order to learn something about its future. Historical consciousness should be conceptualized as an operation of human intellect rendering present actuality intelligible while fashioning its future perspectives. . . . By means of historical identity, the human self expands its temporal extension beyond the limits of birth and death, beyond mere mortality" (Rüssen 2004, pp. 67–68).

Historical consciousness places objects, events, beliefs, and people in a broader temporal framework, thereby reframing the autobiographical self. In doing so, historical consciousness serves an orienting function. Nowhere is this function more evident than in the construction of national historical identities. Consider, for instance, two ways our autobiographical self can be placed within the broader context of the American narrative of manifest destiny. We may come to view ourselves as bearers of a long-standing tradition of manifest destiny that we choose to uphold under most circumstances. Alternatively, we may view this national narrative more skeptically as entailing imperial domination and place ourselves as critics favoring compensatory actions. Historical consciousness orients us not by proposing a determined course of action but

by forcing us to confront our thoughts and actions in the light of earlier events and framings thereof.

In our work with teachers, this historicization was exemplified in our ongoing discussions. We came to recognize that the wave of globalization we were exploring made it impossible for us to know, today, what our descendants will think tomorrow about the implications of the times in which we live. Such placement of our daily activities within the flux of time led one teacher to describe herself as a "pioneer" in education—a term at once embodying individual agency and shared historical time.

Whether examined within the parameters of an individual lifespan or in its historically informed reconceptualization, consciousness entails three core competencies: First is *sensitivity* toward objects in our environment (e.g., people, places, melodies, landscapes) with which the self comes into contact. Historical consciousness entails selective sensitivity for objects and circumstances that link us to past and future (an inscription on a wall, the shape of urban streets, a monument). Second, consciousness entails the competency of *organization*—the capacity to arrange such mental representations. Autobiographic consciousness distills patterns that reveal defining qualities of self. Historical consciousness, on the other hand, employs historical understanding to reinterpret experience along a continuum of past, present, and future, conferring new meaning on our experiences. Finally, consciousness entails the competency of *self-representation*—the reflective capacity to understand ourselves as knowers and feelers—and as historical actors. Through this latter competency, consciousness exercises its orienting function. Knowledge of ourselves, of what we value, of what makes us anxious, as well as knowledge of how we stand vis-à-vis the experience of generations before and ahead of us, necessarily shape the repertoire of options, commitments, and opportunities that we perceive.

GLOBAL CONSCIOUSNESS: EXPANDING OUR SENSE OF THE WORLD WE INHABIT

We define *global consciousness* as the capacity and the inclination to place our self and the people, objects, and situations with which we come into contact within the broader matrix of our contemporary world. An individual exhibits global consciousness when she is attuned to daily encounters with world cultures, landscapes, and products (e.g., through the Internet and other media and through migration); places such encounters in a broader narrative or explanatory framework of contemporary

global processes (e.g., the traffic of people, capital, and ideas; shifting economic, demographic, and cultural interdependence); and perceives herself as an actor in such a global context (e.g., acting locally on global issues, using channels of transnational participation, resisting geopolitical change). In our formulation, global consciousness places the self along an axis of contemporary *space* in ways comparable to the way historical consciousness places it along an axis of *time* (Seixas 2004).

Three cognitive-affective capacities lie at the heart of global consciousness as here defined: *global sensitivity*, or our awareness of local experience as a manifestation of broader developments in the planet; *global understanding,* or our capacity to think in flexible and informed ways about contemporary worldwide developments; and *global self*, or a perception of ourselves as global actors, a sense of planetary belonging and membership in humanity that guides our actions and prompts our civic commitments.

Global Sensitivity

No person experiences globalization in its fullest complexity, but the daily lives of billions of individuals around the world are affected by this contemporary process in concrete ways. Changes in diet, work, neighbors, disease, consumption, and communications reflect novel forms of production, governance, and cultural exchange. Global sensitivity entails selective attention to issues markedly shaped by, or shaping, global interconnectedness. Daily experiences are viewed as instances of the larger world's increasing local presence.

Michael exhibited global sensitivity when he reinterpreted a bottle of juice standing on a seminar table in Cambridge, Massachusetts, as mixing physical oranges picked by workers in Florida, Mexico, and Brazil and symbolically containing stories of individual opportunity and social inequality. Michael's attention to transnational production alerts him to the lives of Mexican and Brazilian farmers whose existence unfolds well beyond his immediate reality. A globally conscious mind is attuned to such local expressions of global phenomena whether "local" is one's own doorstep or a town multiple time zones away.

Opportunities for global sensitivity abound. Cultural diversity dominates everyday life in postindustrial and developing nations alike. Film, music, advertising, and other media transport cultural symbols transnationally, rendering popular culture as a central agent in the selection and representation of things global. By redistributing jobs around the planet,

transnational production is creating new inter- and intranational inequalities and social unrest, which are in turn projected on television screens worldwide. The globally conscious mind notices these, selectively, as experiences of increasing interconnectedness and tension.

Global Understanding

In addition to sensitivity, global consciousness requires an informed understanding of contemporary developments on the planet—within a framework whereby daily practices and products are interpreted and organized. Global consciousness does not mindlessly absorb, consume, or resist the products and practices yielded by accelerated global exchange. Rather, it seeks to locate them, reflectively, within credible explanations of how the world works, trustworthy narratives about how it came to be this way, and informed consideration of how local cultures mediate experiences of global transformations. Just as historical consciousness is unattainable without an understanding of history, global consciousness is impossible without an unfolding understanding of the world and the ways it is rapidly changing.

To promote students' understanding, Michael focused on student's capacity to use information in novel contexts (Cheng 2005; Gärdenfors 2005; Wiske 1999). Indeed he approached the study of outsourcing armed with intellectual resources that his students lacked. He recognized the unprecedented macroeconomic growth in countries like China and India. India alone averaged a 5.9 percent annual economic growth rate between 1996 and 2002. He recognized India's overall poverty reduction rate, which exceeds the UN's Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger by the year 2015 (United Nations 1999). He tempered this observation by describing the distribution of wealth and opportunity. For example, in 2000, 79 percent of India's population was still living on less than two dollars a day (World Bank 2004a), and only 20 percent of the nation's poor children completed the eighth grade (compared to 82 percent of their richer peers) (Stern 2001; World Bank 2002b). Michael recognized that an account of the impact of outsourcing needs to move beyond purely economic indicators to capture changes in the overall well-being of the affected populations.[2] Examination of Motorola cell phones, Reebok shoes, or Fender guitars when placed against interpretive frameworks of this kind informs at once our understanding of the objects and our relationships with them.

Global Self-Representation

Finally, global consciousness is characterized by its power to construct a representation of the self as an actor in the global matrix. As we come into contact with people, products, or daily situations contextualized in a broader global framework, we take note of these experiences—advancing at once our understanding of the world and of ourselves in relation to it. We become aware of the inclinations, relationships, commitments, and concerns that link us to the planet and to others in it (M. Suárez-Orozco, C. Suárez-Orozco, and Qin-Hilliard 2005). Global consciousness provides the self with a renewed sense of relationship to people and issues across personal, family, local, cultural, national, regional, and global landscapes—whether such relationship proves to be harmonic or problematic (Haste 2004; Hayden & Thompson 1989; Nussbaum 2000; Youniss et al. 2002; Walker 2002).[3]

It is by construing the self as a global actor that this form of consciousness performs its orienting function. Particular ways of positioning ourselves in our rapidly globalizing world will channel our actions in one direction or another. We may have come to view ourselves as actors promoting economic liberalization or as compensatory agents in a world of growing inequality. Such perceptions of self and world in interaction will inform how we meet novel situations in everyday life: from considering the additional cost of fair-trade products to envisioning our heightened or reduced professional opportunities.

Global consciousness does not yield *one* necessary normative path to guide practical action. Understanding the conditions leading an immigrant to move into our neighborhood does not indicate whether cultural differences or human commonalities will be privileged in our forthcoming neighborly interactions. Similarly, understanding the circumstances that enabled a foreign company to establish a new manufacturing plant in Maharashtra, India, offers workers no direct advice as to whether to seek employment there. Neither does it directly instruct Michael's students about what should be done, nationally or individually, to maximize the benefits and curtail the costs of outsourcing. Instead, our sensitivity toward, understanding of, and personal engagement with global matters provide a platform from which multiple possible courses of action can be assessed, including the option of no action at all.

A deeper understanding of economic integration and reflections on himself as a global actor led Michael to expand the perception of his own role

as a teacher and of the curricular content for which he feels responsible. "I used to have things that I read for pleasure [outside the classroom] (literature, news) and things I read for [for class] (works in history and sociology)," he explained. "Now everything I read seems to be relevant in the classroom!" By teaching globalization, he argued, he is teaching about "our world, here, today, and how we live our lives." For Michael, teaching about globalization, fostering global consciousness among youth, has become a channel for global participation in its own right.

In sum, as here defined, global consciousness captures the capacity to attend to global dimensions of our contemporary experience; to reflect on its tensions, issues, and opportunities by bringing informed categories and modes of thinking to bear; and to define our identities as members of complex global political, social, economic, and environmental spheres.

AN EDUCATION FOR GLOBAL CONSCIOUSNESS: IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

We began this essay by describing our experience with a small group of exemplary teachers in Massachusetts determined to teach globalization. Then we defined global consciousness as a desirable aim of contemporary education and suggested a structure of cognitive-affective competencies on which it stands. Preparing students to thrive as members of world societies calls for teachers who view themselves as brokers between children and their rapidly changing environments—not mere conveyors of certified information. In the best case scenarios, students are exposed to a school culture of global consciousness—one in which global influences in our daily lives, the eradication of global poverty, or the puzzles of interculturality permeate hallway posters, cafeteria discussions, and student organizations.[4] In most school realities, however, not all teachers will embrace the new demand—nor should they, in our view, be obligated to do so. The postindustrial educational systems of today call for a new distribution of areas and levels of expertise in schools where a small number of trained "teacher-brokers" and a collaborative institutional ethos may be more reasonable goals, as we strive to "bring what we teach and how we teach into the twenty-first century" (Wallis & Steptoe 2006).

Admittedly culturally positioned, our observations about global consciousness as a goal for contemporary education call for further study. Advancing our understanding of global consciousness as a cognitive-

affective construct demands that we come to understand its important variations.[5] For example, we hypothesize that individuals hold more or less stable *forms* of global consciousness—that is, particular ways of understanding our changing world and orienting oneself in it. For instance, some may tend to place particular experiences within stable narrative plots of single leading forces of change (e.g., the success of free markets), finding themselves as participants in this movement. Others may understand our contemporary world as one of tensions and resistances and find themselves oriented as critical of ongoing change. A psychological examination of types of global consciousness may inform the degree to which the beliefs and orientations that constitute particular forms of global consciousness operate as well-articulated belief systems or as a loose collection of sometimes contradictory ideas.

We also hypothesize that the content and orientation of global consciousness varies across cultures and regions as people situate themselves differently in geopolitical, cultural, and environmental landscapes. Thus a study of global consciousness must be cross-cultural. In the same vein, we may expect global consciousness to vary developmentally. We would anticipate that youth who have been directly exposed to experiences of globalization (as through migration, formal learning, or social entrepreneurship) may exhibit greater global sensitivity, more informed understanding, and a more nuanced sense of global self. An empirical study of young individuals of demonstrated global consciousness (e.g., those receiving awards from Oxfam, the World Bank, and Netaid) would help us understand variations in students' beliefs and commitments as we make comparisons based on age, region, and level of formal education.

To conclude, whether we peer at global consciousness through the normative lens of education or we examine it empirically as a developing psychological capacity, the most important function of global consciousness for today's individuals is to give coherence to otherwise fragmented experience. Ongoing breaking news from around the world, a fast-changing job market, accelerating intercultural exchanges, and communications innovations prove profoundly disorienting for students and adults alike. Global consciousness situates us—not without tension—in unifying narratives and explanations that help us make sense of daily developments on the planet. In doing so, global consciousness expands our human self beyond the limits of our here and now, revealing new aspects of our identity in connection to others and to the planet.

NOTES

1. Damasio distinguishes this higher-order consciousness from "core" consciousness—a more fundamental capacity that, as self and object interact, provides an organism with a sense of self in the present moment and immediate place.

2. Note that in our formulation, and that of a strong tradition of domain-specific cognition, capacities such as learning to learn, problem definition, problem solving, and pattern finding are inextricable from their substantive knowledge base.

3. Like long-standing notions of internationalism and cosmopolitanism, the concept of global consciousness attends to matters of identity, awareness of cultural difference, and transnational interconnectedness. It differs from those traditional educational constructs in its selective emphasis on contemporary globalization-related issues that lie beyond a focus on the nation-state or on an ability to "feel at home" anywhere around the world.

4. For an example of current efforts toward such enculturation, see the description of the Tensta Gymnasium, the public school in Stockholm Sweden, in the introduction of this volume.

5. For comparable reflections taking place in the area of historical consciousness, see Seixas 2004.

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