

SC376: Social Justice in a Global Context

Instructor: Prof. Matthew Williams

Course meeting time: Tuesday & Thursday, 9:00-10:15 am

Course location: Gasson 206

Office hours: Tuesday & Wednesday, 1:00-2:00 pm or by appointment

Office location: McGuinn Hall, 410-D

Instructor's e-mail: matthew.williams.3@bc.edu

(Please note that any e-mail sent to matthew.williams@bc.edu will *not* reach me. You must include the ".3".)

Instructor's phone number: 617-552-8413

(E-mail is probably a quicker way to reach me, as I check my e-mail at least once a day, while I only check my voicemail a few times a week.)

Course Description

This class is structured around a teaching game, the Global Justice Game, developed (with some help from me and others) by Bill Gamson, a professor emeritus here at BC. Although playing it should be fun, it should also be a meaningful learning experience--the game is structured to simulate various real-world social dynamics in somewhat simplified form to help you better understand those dynamics. Specifically, the game deals with economic globalization and the global justice movement (often--and somewhat incorrectly--known as the anti-globalization movement.) In addition to helping you understand the forces of globalization, this game should also help you understand some bigger sociological concepts. The game and class come from what is known in sociology as a "critical" perspective--that is, sympathetic to progressive social movements and critical of systems of unequal power. The game is designed not only to help students learn about the sociology of globalization, but to help activists learn to think strategically. Students of any political persuasion are welcome to take the class--and to challenge me--but you should be aware of this basic political orientation when you decide if this class is one you will enjoy.

We will start with a couple classes centered around lectures, in which we will go over the basics about economic globalization and the global justice movement. Though most of the readings will be from a critical perspective, there will be readings representing all sides of the globalization debate. There will be a fair amount of reading during these first few weeks. Once we have completed these introductory lectures, we will begin to play the Global Justice Game. The Game is made up of seven scenarios, each of which will take three class sessions to play. Each scenario has game-related material you will need to read, plus more scholarly readings that will build on the introductory material, to give you a progressively more in-depth picture of economic globalization and the global justice movement. The reading load during this part of the class should be considerably lighter. At the end of each scenario, we will discuss what happened during game play and I may do some mini-lectures about the reading material and how it relates to the game if necessary.

The Global Justice Game is a role-playing game--for each scenario, a group of you will be assigned to play a particular organization, such as a branch of the US government, a corporation, an activist organization, or a media outlet. Which team you will play will vary from scenario to scenario, so by the end of the semester, you will have played a wide range of roles. Each team has its own distinct set of success indicators; these success indicators represent real-world social forces the real-life equivalent of your organization would need to worry about, such as the price of stock for corporations or popular support for activist groups. As you play each scenario, you want to strategize about not only how to achieve your goals in the scenario, but how to raise your success indicators--indeed, your success indicators should give you a good sense of what your goals are. Some teams (such as corporations or the World Trade Organization) should have an easier time raising their scores than others (activist groups or third world countries), reflecting the inequalities in power of the real world.

One of the goals of this class is for you to come away with a better understanding of how social structures shape the decisions people make in the real world. People form goals and make decisions that affect the course of events, but they do not make them with total freedom--they form goals and make decisions under pressure from larger structural forces over which no one has total control, pressures that make some goals easier to achieve and some decisions more attractive than others. Thus the fact that the corporations in the Global Justice Game have price of stock for one of their success indicators reflects the pressures of financial markets on corporations in the real world. This class should also help you understand how inequalities in power play out in the real world--even as people decide on goals and make decisions under pressure, some have an easier time achieving their goals because the social structure is organized in such a way that it favors them and their goals. Finally, this class should help you think about how social justice movement can best strategize to achieve their goals--what means are effective for pressuring governments and corporations to change the way they operate. These questions of social structure, inequalities in power and social change are central concerns of sociology, which will be looking at specifically in the context of economic globalization and the global justice movement. For any of you actively involved in social justice movements, this will also help you think about the challenges and opportunities your group faces.

Readings

Books

The following books will be used in the class and are available at the BC bookstore; they will also be on course reserve at the library:

- Walden Bello, *Deglobalization: Ideas for a New World Economy* (2nd edition) (New York, Zed Books, 2004)
- John Cavanagh and Jerry Mander (editors), *Alternatives to Economic Globalization: A Better World is Possible* (2nd edition) (San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2004)
- John Madeley, *Big Business, Poor Peoples: The Impact of Transnational Corporations of the World's Poor* (New York, Zed Books, 1999)
- Tom Mertes (editor), *A Movement of Movements: Is Another World Really Possible?* (New York, Verso, 2004)

- Richard Peet et al., *Unholy Trinity: The IMF, World Bank and WTO* (New York, Zed Books, 2003)
- Vandana Shiva, *Protect or Plunder?: Understanding Intellectual Property Rights* (New York, Zed Books, 1997)

On-Line Course Reserve

Many of the readings will be available in PDF format in the library's on-line course reserve system. While this may be less convenient than a pre-printed coursepack, it is also considerably cheaper.

Web

A few of the readings will be available on the internet. The URLs for each reading are provided in the syllabus.

Attendance and Class Participation

Attendance is required for this class. In order to learn from this class and do the written assignments, you must be present to play the game. Additionally, since you be playing in teams, your absence will take away from others' experience of the game. Therefore, for each unexcused absence after the third, I will deduct one point from your final grade.

If you come into class late, after attendance has been taken, please check in with me at the end of class or you will be marked as absent. If you are more than fifteen minutes late, you will be credited with only half an attendance.

For the same reasons that attendance is important, so is class participation. Therefore class participation will be worth 10% of your grade.

Written Assignments

For All Assignments

In all assignments, you should draw on your experiences in playing the Global Justice Game, the readings, and the class lectures to answer the questions. The object is to use your experience in the game to illuminate the real-world social dynamics covered in the course readings and lectures.

All assignments should be clearly organized and written essays, not simply a stream of consciousness response to the game. The quality of your writing will count towards your grade.

All references to the readings--whether summarizing information, paraphrasing, or direct quotes--should be fully and properly cited.

In your writing, you should focus on the following themes:

- How larger social structures and forces create different constraints and options for different players/real-world social actors, shaping their goals and actions.

- How these social forces create conflicts of interests between different players/real-world social actors.
- What strategic options are available to different players/real-world social actors.
- How inequality in power affects the outcome of conflicts between different players/real-world social actors and the strategies they use.
- How all this affects the possibilities of achieving social justice globally.

Remember that the success indicators, action options, and other game mechanics are intended to represent many of the real world social forces covered in the readings and lectures.

If you have any questions about any assignment while you are working on it, please feel free to contact me.

Assignment 1

Assignment 1 will constitute 30% of your grade. This assignment consists of an 8-10 page response paper to one of the first three scenarios--your choice of "Factory Fire in Fabrikistan" (due Thursday, October 6) "Biopiracy in Plantanoguay" (due Tuesday, October 18) or "Cancer Alley" (due Thursday, October 27). You may not write a response paper to a scenario in which you were a member of one of the journalist teams.

Discuss your role in the scenario, keeping in mind the themes listed above, as well as the following questions: How much power did you feel you had? How were you able to exert that power? What forces did you feel were constraining your choices, pushing you to make certain decisions? What does this say about social actors in similar positions in the real world? What constraints do they face and what options do they realistically have open to them? Based on this, how would you assess the three paradigms of neoclassical economics/neoliberalism, Keynesianism, and world-systems theory as theories attempting to explain the real world? How well do they account for the social forces affecting the sort of social actor you played? What are the implications for this in terms of achieving social justice globally?

Assignment 2

Assignment 2 will constitute another 30% of your grade. This assignment is an 8-10 page response paper to two of the scenarios, one of which must come from the fourth through sixth scenarios--your choice of "Strip-Mining Banglabush" (due Tuesday, November 8), "Race to the Bottom" (due Thursday, November 17), or "Selling Green in Fabrikistan" (due Tuesday, November 29). The other scenario should be one you have not written on before. You may also not write a response paper to any of the scenarios in which you were a member of one of the journalist teams.

Contrast your experiences in two different scenarios, one in which you played a relatively powerful social actor (the A-Team, WTO, State Department, European Union, HAZMAT or Chic Duds) with a less powerful one (one of the third world countries or social action teams). What did these differences in power mean in terms of achieving your goals and raising your success indicators? How did this affect the different action options you had open to you? Your ability to bargain with other players? What does this say about how

conflicts between social actors in similar positions in the real world? Based on this, how would you assess the three paradigms of neoclassical economics/neoliberalism, Keynesianism, and world-systems theory as theories attempting to explain the real world? How well do they account for the social forces affecting the sort of social actors you played? What are the implications for this in terms of achieving social justice globally?

Assignment 3

Assignment 3 will constitute the final 30% of your grade. This assignment is an 8-10 page response paper to your experiences throughout the course, drawing especially on the final scenario, "Building a Better World". It will be due on Thursday, December 15 at 9:00 am, the due date for the final exam for this class. Please leave the exams in the box that will be in the sociology grad student lounge, McGuinn 410.

Choose two of proposals for creating a better world, either from the "Building a Better World" scenario or from the reading for the scenario. Discuss how implementing these proposals would make the world a better place. In particular, how would it affect the various teams/their real-world equivalents? How would it change the social forces affecting them? Would it lead them to make different sorts of decisions? Additionally, propose a strategy that the social action teams and/or the third world countries might use to get these proposals implemented, drawing on both the readings from throughout the class and your experiences with the Game, particularly the various action options available. How could those backing the proposals for social change deal with larger social forces and teams/real-world social actors opposing their proposals? How could they deal with inequalities in power and conflicts of interest among teams/real-world social actors?

Late Assignments and Extensions

For every day a paper is late, I will deduct three points from it. Late papers should be turned in to my mailbox, #71 in McGuinn 410. Please do not e-mail them to me as attachments. If you must turn a paper in late, however, you should e-mail me, telling me that you have left it in my mailbox. I do not come into campus everyday to check it and if you leave it there without e-mailing me, I will have to assume that you turned it in the day I find it. Due to the already flexible due dates for assignments 1 and 2, I will not grant extensions for them. If you need an extension for assignment 3, please contact me in a timely fashion about it--not the day it is due. Exceptions to all these rules will be granted in the case of a documented medical or personal emergency.

Academic Integrity

Following is BC's definition of academic integrity, from <http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity>. Please familiarize yourself with it. If you have any questions about how to interpret it in the context of class assignments, please feel free to ask me. Any violation of academic integrity will result, at a minimum, in a zero on that assignment. Additionally, I will report the incident to your dean and the Committee on Academic Integrity. This is as much for your protection as mine, since the Committee will conduct an independent review of the incident.

Policy and Procedures

The pursuit of knowledge can proceed only when scholars take responsibility and receive credit for their work. Recognition of individual contributions to knowledge and of the intellectual property of others builds trust within the University and encourages the sharing of ideas that is essential to scholarship. Similarly, the educational process requires that individuals present their own ideas and insights for evaluation, critique, and eventual reformulation. Presentation of others' work as one's own is not only intellectual dishonesty, but also undermines the educational process.

Standards

Academic integrity is violated by any dishonest act which is committed in an academic context including, but not restricted to the following:

Cheating is the fraudulent or dishonest presentation of work. Cheating includes but is not limited to:

- the use or attempted use of unauthorized aids in examinations or other academic exercises submitted for evaluation;
- fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation of data, results, sources for papers or reports, or in clinical practice, as in reporting experiments, measurements, statistical analyses, tests, or other studies never performed; manipulating or altering data or other manifestations of research to achieve a desired result; selective reporting, including the deliberate suppression of conflicting or unwanted data;
- falsification of papers, official records, or reports;
- copying from another student's work;
- actions that destroy or alter the work of another student;
- unauthorized cooperation in completing assignments or during an examination;
- the use of purchased essays or term papers, or of purchased preparatory research for such papers;
- submission of the same written work in more than one course without prior written approval from the instructors involved;
- dishonesty in requests for make-up exams, for extensions of deadlines for submitting papers, and in any other matter relating to a course.

Plagiarism is the act of taking the words, ideas, data, illustrations, or statements of another person or source, and presenting them as one's own. Each student is responsible for learning and using proper methods of paraphrasing and footnoting, quotation, and other forms of citation, to ensure that the original author, speaker, illustrator, or source of the material used is clearly acknowledged.

Other breaches of academic integrity include:

- the misrepresentation of one's own or another's identity for academic purposes;
- the misrepresentation of material facts or circumstances in relation to examinations, papers, or other evaluative activities;
- the sale of papers, essays, or research for fraudulent use;

- the alteration or falsification of official University records;
- the unauthorized use of University academic facilities or equipment, including computer accounts and files;
- the unauthorized recording, sale, purchase, or use of academic lectures, academic computer software, or other instructional materials;
- the expropriation or abuse of ideas and preliminary data obtained during the process of editorial or peer review of work submitted to journals, or in proposals for funding by agency panels or by internal University committees;
- the expropriation and/or inappropriate dissemination of personally-identifying human subject data;
- the unauthorized removal, mutilation, or deliberate concealment of materials in University libraries, media, or academic resource centers.

Collusion is defined as assistance or an attempt to assist another student in an act of academic dishonesty. Collusion is distinct from collaborative learning, which may be a valuable component of students' scholarly development. Acceptable levels of collaboration vary in different courses, and students are expected to consult with their instructor if they are uncertain whether their cooperative activities are acceptable.

Special Needs

If you have a learning disability, please tell me during the first week of classes, so that I can best prepare to accommodate you.

Course Schedule

Disclaimer: This schedule is subject to change should the need arise. If I make any changes, I will tell you promptly, so you know which work you should complete when.

Part 1: Introduction

Introduction, September 6
No readings

Neoliberalism and Its Critics, September 8 & 13

Web: Mark Weisbrot, "Globalization: A Primer", October 1999, Center for Economic and Policy Research website: <http://www.cepr.net/GlobalPrimer2.htm>

Course Reserve: Jagdish Bhagwati, *In Defense of Globalization* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 51-67, 122-134, 162-195

Course Reserve: Thomas R. Shannon, *An Introduction to the World-System Perspective* (2nd edition) (Boulder CO, Westview Press, 1996), pp. 23-43, 85-125

Bello, pp. 1-90

The Global Justice Movement, September 15 & 20

- Course Reserve: Richard Flacks, *Making History* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1988), pp. 1-24, 68-97
- Course Reserve: Jackie Smith, Ron Pagnucco, and Charles Chatfield, "Social Movements and World Politics" (in Jackie Smith, Ron Pagnucco, and Charles Chatfield [editors], *Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics*, Syracuse NY, Syracuse University Press, 1997), pp. 59-77
- Course Reserve: Kathryn Sikkink, "Patterns of Dynamic Multilevel Governance and the Insider-Outsider Coalition" (in Donatella della Porta and Sidney Tarrow [editors], *Transnational Protest and Global Activism*, Lanham MD, Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), pp.151-173
- Course Reserve: Jackie Smith, "Globalizing Resistance" (in Jackie Smith and Hank Johnston [editors], *Globalization and Resistance*, Lanham MD, Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), pp. 207-227
- Course Reserve: Lesley J. Wood, "Bridging the Chasms" (in Joe Bandy and Jackie Smith [editors], *Coalitions Across Borders*, Lanham MD, Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), pp. 95-117
- Mertes, pp. 17-48, 71-93, 111-134, 152-174, 192-215

Part 2: The Global Justice Game

Factory Fire in Fabrikistan, September 22, 27 & 29

Peet, pp. 56-110

Madeley, pp. 102-114

Web: Asian Human Rights Commission, "Thailand: Kader Fire", October 6, 1993, AHRC website:

<http://www.ahrchk.net/hrsolid/mainfile.php/1993vol05no03/2056/>

Course Reserve: Naomi Klein, *No Logo* (New York, Picador, 1999), pp. 195-257

Course Reserve: Ethel Brooks, "Transnational Campaigns Against Child Labor" (in Joe Bandy and Jackie Smith [editors], *Coalitions Across Borders*, Lanham MD, Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), pp. 121-139

Biopiracy in Plantanoguay, October 4, 6 & 11

Peet, pp. 146-200

Course Reserve: Al Gedicks, *The New Resource Wars* (Boston, South End Press, 1993), pp. 13-38

Shiva, pp. 1-10, 21-68, 94-112

Cancer Alley, October 13, 18 & 20

Web: Hemispheric Social Alliance (editor), *Lessons from NAFTA: The High Cost of "Free" Trade*, June 2003, download as a PDF from the Public Citizen website:

<http://www.publiccitizen.org/trade/nafta/index.cfm?ID=5137&relatedpages=1&catID=114&secID=1187>

Course Reserve: Robert D. Bullard (editor), *Confronting Environmental Racism* (Boston, South End Press, 1993), pp. 15-39, 107-122

Strip-Mining Banglabush, October 25, 27 & November 1

Peet, pp. 111-145

Course Reserve: Maude Barlow and Tony Clarke, *Blue Gold* (New York, The New Press, 2002), pp. 101-128, 154-180

Course Reserve: Oscar Olivera, *¡Chocabamba!* (Cambridge MA, South End Press, 2004), pp. 7-49

Madeley, pp. 71-101

Race to the Bottom, November 3, 8 & 10

Madeley, pp. 26-70

Course Reserve: Victor Suarez Carrera, "Globalization, Peasant Agriculture and Food Security in Mexico" (in Vandana Shiva and Gitanjali Bedi [editors], *Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security*, Thousand Oaks CA, Sage Publications, 2002), pp. 274-290

Course Reserve: Walden Bello, *The Future in Balance* (Oakland CA, Food First Books, 2001), pp. 194-202

Shiva, pp. 69-93

Database, Expanded Academic ASAP: Sue Bradford, "New Chance, New Challenge for Brazil's Landless Movements" (*NACLA Report on the Americas*, March/April 2003), pp. 32-36

Web: Pablo Ortellado, "What Happened to the Left?" August 8, 2003, ZNet website: <http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=48&ItemID=4016>

Selling Green in Fabrikistan, November 15, 17 & 22

Course Reserve: Nancy A. Naples and Manisha Desai (editors), *Women's Activism and Globalization* (New York, Routledge, 2002), pp. 15-33, 189-219

Course Reserve: Jerry Mander and Edward Goldsmith (editors), *The Case Against the Global Economy* (San Francisco, Sierra Club Books, 1996), pp. 33-46, 71-77

Course Reserve: Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York, Anchor Books, 2000) pp. 276-305

Madeley, pp. 128-144

Database, Expanded Academic ASAP: Martha Honey, "Giving a Grade to Costa Rica's Green Tourism" (*NACLA Report on the Americas*, May/June 2003), pp. 39-46

NO CLASS, *Thanksgiving*, November 24

Building a Better World, November 29, December 1 & 6

Cavanagh and Mander, pp. 75-163, 271-332

Bello, pp. 91-118

Course Reserve: Walden Bello, Nicola Bullard and Kamal Malhorta (editors), *Global Finance*, (New York, Zed Books, 2000), pp. 42-60, 123-139

Course Reserve: Susan George, *Another World is Possible If ...* (New York, Verso, 2004), pp. 135-159

Web: Anil Agarwal and Sunita Narain, "Redressing Ecological Poverty Through Participatory Democracy", Political Economy Research Institute Working Paper # 36, 2000, download as a PDF from PERI website: <http://wwwx.oit.umass.edu/~peri/html/1/71.html>

Wrap Up Session, December 8
No reading