

Topics in Culture and Globalization

“What was that bump?”

See

[http://adbusters.org/creativere
sistance/spoofads/misc/bump/](http://adbusters.org/creativere
sistance/spoofads/misc/bump/)

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Lecture 1:

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Goals of the Course

- Critically evaluate key issues and debates
- Develop tools for analyzing culture and globalization
- Examine case studies to test theory

“The True Colors of Benetton”

See

<http://adbusters.org/creativity/resistance/spoofads/fashion/benetton/>

What is globalization?

- Malcolm Waters (1995)
 - "... a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding" (p. 3)

Emerging Global Strip Mall?

- Homogenization
- Power of major multinationals threatens
 - Economic autonomy
 - Cultural diversity
- Ravages of consumerism
 - Private aims trump public aspirations

New Era of Global Violence

- How do media and culture influence U.S. policies towards others?
- “Clash of civilizations” rhetoric elides historical change and ethnic diversity
- “The situation in Iraq”: there’s no smart bomb smart enough to rebuild a nation

Features of globalization

- increasing transnational flows
- decline of nation-state
- global political, economic and cultural organizations
- global cities as sites of interaction
- flows of cultural products
- spread of Western-style consumerism

(Globalization: The Reader, p. 5)

Paradoxes of Globalization

- Uneven effects
- Everyone connected, but different degrees of power
- Cultural differences persist
- “Culture” used in ways to disguise inequities

What role for culture?

- homogenization?
- cosmopolitanism / hybridization?
- overlapping diasporas?

Breakdancers in Tokyo

– How define culture in era of deterritorialization?

Rhymester: "You better listen up"