

VISIONS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

## Toward an Anti-disciplinary Global Studies

STEPHEN J. ROSOW

*State University of New York at Oswego*

This article investigates the prospects for interdisciplinary global studies in the changing context of university education. Its central question is: as power and structure in the university become more and more integrated with the transformations of globalization, how can global studies become an authorized site of research and teaching while resisting the rules and micro-powers in the university that constitute it as such an authorized site which is increasingly determined by neoliberal globalization?

**Keywords:** global studies, interdisciplinary, university structure, politics of knowledge

Arguably, all academic disciplines are interdisciplinary. An academic discipline becomes an institutional presence by establishing boundaries of knowledge, which authorize teaching and research in the setting of the university. As such, academic disciplines are subject to discursive norms of the fields of knowledge they represent and institutional pressures operating within universities, as well as larger social and political forces.

Where does this leave the self-consciously interdisciplinary field of international/global studies?<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, it is under pressure to become a discipline. Anyone who has attempted to establish an academic degree in international or global studies has had to answer the charge from the "traditional" disciplines that the new program is not rigorous enough; it is not a discipline, with common methods, and a distinctive field of inquiry. In short, it does not discipline its practitioners enough. Never mind that the borders of knowledge that establish separate disciplines are themselves porous and that their standards, definitions, and norms are contested from within their discipline. They are established; they have the position of authority and power to which the new discipline aspires (to have representatives on faculty committees and faculty senates; to have a budget; to be allocated faculty lines: in short, to receive an authorized presence in the university). A discursive power works through the petty assertions of power and authoritativeness of colleagues on faculty committees who know little or nothing about the new programs, a power manifest in a routinized set of practices designated by "academic rigor," "intellectual integrity," and the requirement that the object of the discourse conform to norms of clarity, precision, and distinctiveness: in short, a microphysics of power invests the academic body to ensure that it becomes a

<sup>1</sup> I return shortly to the linguistic intrigues surrounding the "international" and the "global."

practice of knowledge/power attuned to the politics and culture of the university, society, and polity.

On the other hand, as an interdisciplinary program, which seeks to remain interdisciplinary, global and international studies threatens the secure identities of academic disciplines. It seeks to remain something other than an academic discipline. The intellectual integrity of such interdisciplinary programs comes not from the presumption of distinctness and clarity of an objective field of study, and of fixed rules of engagement with which to battle in that field, but in the fluidity of movement across established borders of knowledge. Its very identity as an academic discipline reveals the ambiguity and contingency of the object of inquiry, an ontological presumption at odds with the self-understanding of most established academic disciplines. Global and international studies is, then, political in ways late modern academic disciplines are but conceal from themselves in order to validate the exclusions which constitute them as disciplines distinct from others.

To be "interdisciplinary," then, is to *become established* in a critical position within the university. Such new programs allow adaptation to change within the university without unduly challenging the prevailing division of academic labor and structures of university power. The turn to interdisciplinary global studies is in part an adaptation to globalization. Interdisciplinarity is a strategy of change in the production of knowledge with draws on the structuring of power in university education in order to adapt to changing world conditions without fundamentally challenging prevailing power structures. It is also a strategy attuned to the increasing demands of university administrations for flexibility as funding sources dry up and are increasingly replaced by more direct integration of the university into the corporate, and global capitalist economy.<sup>2</sup> But at the same time, interdisciplinarity, because it sets knowledge production against the prevailing academic disciplines, constitutes possibilities for critical knowledge that can inform critical positions and political practices.

Global studies are constituted within a complex relationship of global transformation and the administrative, disciplinary, and institutional powers in the university. In staking out a position outside the institutionalization of academic knowledge, outside of the disciplines, global and international studies (and other interdisciplinary programs as well) contests the disciplinarity of the disciplines. But they cannot forget that they do so in order to obtain the privileges which come from being a discipline without which they cannot survive as a legitimate presence in the university. Interdisciplinary programs contest disciplinarity so that they can accept the disciplinarity of academic discipline on their own terms (knowing full well—or at least they ought to know full well—that they cannot do so). The trick is to become established in the university and the academic community while continuing to hold on to principles that challenge the normativity of academic discipline. It is clear that global and international studies is a "them," an other defined according to the terms of the authorized "we" of the university's academic structure. How can international/global studies maintain a critical position while it is constituted through the structuring powers which work through the division of the university into academic disciplines? As power and structure in the university become more and more integrated with the transformations of globalization how can global studies become an authorized site of research and teaching while resisting the disciplinarity (the rules and micro-powers in the university that constitute it as such an authorized site) of a university increasingly influenced by neoliberal globalization?

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<sup>2</sup> There is a growing literature on the transformation of the university as it comes to adapt to and integrate itself into the neoliberal, global economy. For good recent overviews see Aronowitz (2001) and Currie and Newson (1998).

An example drawn from my own university can be helpful. The example has to do with the naming of the new interdisciplinary program. In my own university, we settled for "Global and International Studies" for a complex of reasons. First, some faculty involved in developing the program resisted a more thorough move to "global studies" on the dual grounds (1) that the state remains significant (although they recognized its function is now different but in ways that are not very clear or secure), and that "global" seemed to imply the irrelevance of the state; and (2) that "global studies" would cause us political difficulties with "more conservative" and traditional faculty since, after all, they know what are international relations (i.e., they valorize and recognize prevailing representations). Global studies will sound to them too "trendy" and too ephemeral (it turns out my colleagues were correct, as I and others had to defend the new program against such charges in two faculty committees and in the faculty assembly as a whole). Moreover, there was the concern that having the more well-worn "international relations" on a student's diploma would open up job opportunities for graduates that the more novel (even when appropriate) global studies would not.

This example raises internal questions of university structure and the politics of knowledge within the university. It also demonstrates that these internal questions cannot be separated from the external articulations of university structure, knowledge, and teaching with the world. The possibilities of global and international studies are conditioned by these articulations. Indeed, I suggest below that one reason a more broadly interdisciplinary global studies program is becoming acceptable within the university is the perceived need to produce a work force attuned to the technological wizardry, speed, and flexibility of the hypermedia economy and one able to function fluidly in various cultural markets. The discussion that follows must reflect this complexity, not only of the multiple articulations of global studies with the various forms of power operating to constitute it in universities, but also its ambiguous status as a form of knowledge production that reproduces neoliberal globalization at the same time as it harbors potential for critical knowledge and practice. I therefore begin the discussion with a brief account of international studies as an interdisciplinary field of knowledge within the university, and the movement within it toward a more thoroughly interdisciplinary "global" studies. I then introduce the institutional, disciplinary and administrative powers operating in the university. Finally, I move to one possibility for global studies to retain a critical articulation with the global: its participation in transformations in citizenship in liberal arts education.

#### The Problem with International Studies

According to Stanley Hoffmann's often quoted "An American Social Science: International Relations," international relations "has a story of its own... as a largely autonomous part of political science" (1977:41). In his account, international relations developed as an academic discipline due to a convergence of cultural factors (the American intellectual culture was both positivist and receptive to a practically oriented "advice to princes" genre of knowledge), contingent historical factors (the rise of the U.S. to status as world power), and "institutional opportunities" (the ability of academics to link to power both formally, through a revolving door with bureaucracy, and informally, through the development of a private think-tank culture of foundations often linked to universities) (p. 46). The fact that, initially, émigrés from war-torn Europe were the ones who articulated and stressed America's responsibility to remake the world system set the new discipline apart from the crass empiricism which dominated much of the field of political science while nevertheless connecting it to the positivism of American social science.

Hoffmann's narrative is certainly richer than the similar standard narratives of the origin of the contemporary discipline of international relations. More usual is

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an account that tells of the victory of a pragmatic realism over a misguided idealism. While Hoffmann does not dissent from this account, his view is more subtle. For one thing, Hoffmann connects the discipline to American hegemony, rather than seeing it primarily as simply the result of better scholarship and more objective understandings of the real world. For another, he dissents from the ahistorical behaviorism of much of the discipline of international relations. Hoffmann would prefer that the discipline of international relations had retained the more historical and interpretive mode it inherited from émigré continental scholars such as Morgenthau and Wolfers. Nevertheless, his account replicates an ideological position that constitutes the possibilities and limits of the discipline of international relations, and hence reinforces the discipline of the discipline by inscribing a particular politics of representation—idealism vs. realism, the “outside” of the state as anarchy, etc.—in the sedimented, unchangeable core of the discipline.

The discipline of international relations, as an authorized presence in universities, was always somewhat interdisciplinary, but within the confines of being an “odd man out” in the discipline of political science.<sup>3</sup> Invited in was a smattering of diplomatic historians and international law specialists, as well as game theorists and organization theorists. Some of these are fruitful (to be sure, some are not) in their attempts to draw into international relations a wider range of perspectives and approaches. Yet these exist within the institutional structure of an academic discipline of international relations which, for all of its hybrid character, has at this point taken on the disciplinary character of a discipline. It has its gatekeepers, and success (getting jobs, tenure, promotion, grant funding, hierarchy of journals, and reputation) requires conforming to institutionalized “normal science.” International Studies has become an institutionalized profession, with all of the limiting implications this has. Yet this professionalization, especially through the International Studies Association, has created the possibilities for a more broadly based community to form, even as the organization has become a mechanism through which the discipline of international studies has been disciplined to conform to academic norms.<sup>4</sup>

By the early 1980s a sense had already emerged among critics that the science of international relations was not interdisciplinary enough.<sup>5</sup> Surely, this was not the only, or the primary point of criticism. The contestation within the discipline of international relations is a complex development—really a series of developments—that no single narrative can capture completely (just as no single narrative

<sup>3</sup> The gendered language here is not incidental. International relations was an odd “man,” one might say the hyper-man, of political science, the most masculine of a masculine discipline. See Ashley (1989) and Enloe (1989).

<sup>4</sup> By “academic norms” here I do not only mean the norms for success of faculty in universities and colleges, and of programs in international studies within their universities, although this is the most central focus of this article. “Academic norms” also entail the particular, normalized connections between academia and the state, and increasingly with the production of a neoliberal global order. I return to these issues later, as the institutionalization of global/international studies in the university is not separate from its implication in state and world order.

<sup>5</sup> No doubt, the introduction of international political economy in the 1970s contributed to the move toward global studies. But as international political economy came to be assimilated to the sub-field of international organization and adopted positivist methods as its dominant epistemology it came more and more to reinforce the discipline of international relations and mitigate the movement toward more thoroughly interdisciplinary global studies. The transformation of world order studies (in particular the World Order Models Project), a branch of international law, by the introduction of critical social theory and a more inclusive multiculturalism contributed significantly to the movement toward global studies. In the 1980s and 1990s the increasing body of work on “globalization” has also encouraged a more interdisciplinary focus on the global as distinct from the “international.” Much of this literature has been developed by scholars on the critical edges of international political economy who resisted the positivism and narrowing international organization focus of international political economy. I have in mind here especially the numerous works of Robert Cox, Richard Ashley, Stephen Gill (including his text *Global Political Economy* co-authored with David Law), and Jim Middleman. Further, the increasing interest of political theorists, sociologists, anthropologists, and critical geographers in globalization has also contributed to the development of a more thoroughly interdisciplinary global studies. For a critical survey of the literature on globalization see my “Globalisation and Democratic Theory” (Rosow, 2000).

captures unequivocally the emergence of the discipline itself). In the context of this article, I do not emphasize the history of the discipline of international relations.<sup>6</sup> Rather, I draw out several implications of the fact that this broader call for more interdisciplinary knowledge of the global has developed largely within universities and colleges, mostly, but not only, American.

First, the situatedness of global studies in the university ties it to the discipline of international relations, for in order to carve out and legitimate a space for itself global studies must set itself in some critical relation with the discipline of international relations. To the extent global studies takes as its object social and political forces "beyond" the state, the new discipline cannot help but be identified with the discipline of international relations because it must critique the more state-centric assumptions of the former discipline (as my example in the introductory paragraphs above of naming the new program demonstrated). This is in part because the discipline of international relations is the already established community authorized to produce knowledge about the world "beyond the state." The linkage also flows more deeply. The global cannot help but be conceived in some terms such as I have been using, as "knowledge about the world beyond the state" even though many, including myself, reject the appropriateness of such language. The trope of "international relations" is a constitutive element of modernity. As such it conveys legitimacy to a particular representation of the world.<sup>7</sup> It is difficult to constitute the legitimacy of a knowledge of the global in which such a representation does not operate to structure discourse.

One relevant factor which conditions the more interdisciplinary production of knowledge of the global is that the emerging discipline of global studies gains strength and identity from the unsettled character of the contemporary world. This sets it apart from one of the central disciplinary characteristics of the contemporary discipline of international relations. Parsimony, clarity and objectivity in the definition of key concepts, and the assumptions about language as mirror of some reality external to the language of description, tend to be rejected by many drawn to global studies because these rules of inquiry fail to capture the uncertain conditions of the global world. Global studies promotes studies as well as forms of scholarly communication rooted in interpretive and critical methodologies that value plurality of methods and rules of inquiry and do not seek a unity of knowledge in global studies.<sup>8</sup>

The term "global studies" points to issues generally excluded from international relations, for example, issues connected to gender, poverty (conceived in terms of its linkages across state boundaries), the global spread and concentration of media, the impact of hyper-media, and ecology. The ties to social and political organizations and movements outside the university (social movements concerned with human rights, ecology, and women especially) are important conditions of "global studies." The fact that these extra-university linkages are generally nongovernmental, and concern issues generally excluded from the discipline of international relations, is surely important to the movement away from a state-centered international studies toward a more interdisciplinary global studies. These demand broader, more interdisciplinary studies than the "stepchild of political science" can offer within its own boundaries. Further, the move to a more critical study of international relations has involved the inclusion of perspectives, such as those drawn from Western Marxism and subaltern studies developed in South Asia,

<sup>6</sup> For an alternative to Hoffmann's account of the origin of the discipline of international relations see Schmidt (1998).

<sup>7</sup> Numerous critics of this framework have nevertheless shown its hegemonic pull in the spatio-temporal understandings of modernity. See the political theorist Walker (1993), and the work of geographers Agnew (1994) and Tuathail (1996).

<sup>8</sup> Such a critique is set out brilliantly by George (1994).

especially Indian, universities that deny the liberal separation of disciplines as a matter of principle. While these are critical, and often allied with Left and democratic movements and ideologies, the new field is simultaneously linked to the new disciplinary structures of the university and the wider relations of neoliberalism.

The transformation of university structure toward corporate models of management and toward the privatization of research and funding currently affects the discipline of international relations. For one thing, such a transformation accords new status within the university to global corporations as sources of funding and as determinants of university research. Ironically, a more critical global studies has become appealing precisely as the university comes to be enlisted in furthering neoliberal globalization. I will detail this further below, but just to give one example. The introduction of a multicultural concern with non-Western cultures, while critical of the traditional discipline of international relations, has gained direct support from private corporations seeking graduates with knowledge of current and potential markets, as well as from government agencies.<sup>9</sup> The new sense of the importance of culture in international relations, while harboring significant critical potential, also reproduces the needs of corporations operating on an increasingly global scale. It also feeds a shift in the perceived needs of American security policy for fuller understanding of the cultures of peoples around the world as security interests are reinterpreted more broadly than in terms of military threats from rival states.

We should not assume that simply working in an interdisciplinary global studies community constitutes scholarship as critical. Hence the problem I explore in the remaining two sections of the article: how to maintain a pluralistic and critical scholarly community of global studies within the networks of power/knowledge operating to harness such knowledge to neoliberal globalization, new interpretations of American hegemonic foreign policy, and the corporatized university.

### Interdisciplinarity and the Global

Funded and prompted by interventions from state agencies, a particular form of interdisciplinarity in the study of the world emerged during the Cold War. The distribution of knowledge, and faculty positions, in interdisciplinary area studies and international studies centers during the Cold War reinforced the "international relations" representations of the world even as they constituted interdisciplinary forms of knowledge. Now that the firewall between the corporate economy and the university is breaking down under the pressures of globalization, strategies and structures of knowledge production are likewise changing. New interdisciplinary programs focusing on the global are becoming more appealing but risk doing so by losing their critical edge.

Interdisciplinarity during the Cold War was made possible largely by forces outside the university which transformed important aspects of knowledge production within the university. The science of international relations was enmeshed in a web of relations linking the structure of the university, liberalism, and the Cold War, no doubt in complex ways.<sup>10</sup> Funding for the new field of area

<sup>9</sup> For example, a recent round of grants from the Defense Department to universities is for the development of programs for language training and developing general cultural knowledge of areas of concern to American national security (the NSEP—National Security Education Program). The grants seek to develop not only multicultural awareness and knowledge but also institutional programs in universities to facilitate intelligence (in all its possible meanings and deployments) about areas of potential threat to the United States (as the Defense Department figures such threats).

<sup>10</sup> Several sources on this are useful: See Latham (1997); Chomsky, Katznelson, et. al. (1997); and Simpson (1998).

studies, for example, opened space within the university for new forms of identity which challenged the priorities of the specific social science disciplines. This challenge was often self-conscious on the part of the funding agencies, most often agencies within the national security establishment whose grant descriptions explicitly challenged the narrowness of the traditional disciplines. Much of the Cold War funding of universities introduced new academic identities. Area studies and international studies programs during the Cold War did not merely bring together scholars from different disciplines; these new fields transformed those disciplines and challenged the identities of the academics within them as teachers or researchers engaged in the liberal arts university.

The new identities emerged from a redistribution of academic bodies, supplementing departmental identities with affiliations with research institutes and generating connections and institutional relationships among scholars across departments. This intervention in the production of knowledge in universities by the state certainly influenced the knowledge produced in these centers. But possibilities for knowledge production in the new relationships was not exhausted by the demands of a national security state, and critical scholars did emerge within these centers.

Historians of area studies have emphasized the importance of funding and priorities emerging from the American defense establishment during the Cold War. Some programs, such as Project Camelot, have become notorious. Others, such as funding research institutes—for example, the Center for International Studies at MIT and the Russian Research Centers at Harvard and Columbia—have come to be seen as routine and normal functions of government in the constitution of university knowledge production. The ways in which these interventions in university knowledge production changed the identities of the scholars and disciplines that participated in them is less well known. Whereas some disciplines, anthropology is perhaps the most self-conscious in this respect, have engaged in much self-examination, there has been little attention given to the more general transformation of academic identities occasioned by these Cold War interventions.

Area studies prompted the creation of interdisciplinary (or multidisciplinary) research communities, which included anthropologists, political scientists, economists, psychologists, historians, sociologists, and, occasionally, literary scholars.<sup>11</sup> Area studies scholars tended to become established on the margins of their own disciplines. They developed their own professional organizations and they were often more open to a pluralism of methodologies and theories. Indeed, as international relations became more and more positivist and behavioral (a development also encouraged by national security interests, for example, for risk assessment and counter-insurgency studies), area studies provided a haven for some international relations scholars who resisted the positivist and behavioral trends within the discipline (Stanley Hoffmann, for example, set up at the European Studies Institute at Harvard).

Indeed, one scholar involved in Cold War African studies argues that these new identities were connected to the new global vision and priorities of the United States' hegemony.<sup>12</sup> During the Second World War, the U.S. establishment came to identify itself as a "global" (not merely international) power in the sense that it considered its interests as involved in all corners of the planet. Many of these areas were of *potential* interest and concern, based on projections, sometimes introducing systems analysis, cybernetics, and organizational models into social science and history in order to assess potential developments in specific regions. To retool its identity as a global power, the United States sought a broad-based knowledge of all areas of the world. Moreover, numerous documents discussing the funding and

<sup>11</sup> See Cumings (1998).

<sup>12</sup> Much of this paragraph draws on Wallerstein (1997). Also see Latham (1997).

formation of area studies by academics and government officials testify to the need to overcome the overly narrow insularity of the individual social science disciplines.

Traditional positivist accounts of knowledge production and science considered knowledge as accumulating in stages of development. Sometimes, as with Comte, the stages were explicit (religious, metaphysical, positive). In some liberal conceptions the steady building of progress combined with a Lockean ideal of the "underlaborer" model of knowledge in which scientists, including in the moral sciences, would contribute a small piece of the total knowledge. The totality would be a building, constructed, so to speak, from the ground up, its pieces mortared together through strict methodologies for replication and rules of verification and falsification. This positivist sense of building up a strategic unity of knowledge from discrete pieces was consistent with the Cold War interdisciplinarity. The separate fields and methodologies would be combined as the knowledge was used by the architects of national security. The unity of knowledge would be created by the outside sources, by a sovereign organizer of relevant and useful knowledge, not by the academics themselves. Interdisciplinarity remained an alliance of scholars who moved in and out of research institutes and their home departments, in and out of service to the external funders of interdisciplinary research and to the liberal arts community. Much of this model of interdisciplinarity as the adding up of discrete blocks of knowledge, organized into a whole according to the architectural plans of the national security state, remains in place.

An alternative form of interdisciplinarity, however, seems to be developing, driven by the metaphor of a world as network, rather than as an alliance of separate, sovereign departments and fields of knowledge organized by a super-sovereign state. The picture I draw here is tentative for this new form of interdisciplinarity is in the process of forming. The new interdisciplinarity seems driven more by a logic of metonymy in which fields and scholars link together by constructing new associations suggested by the increasingly de-structured relationships of the global world. For example, attempts to understand the impact of the globalization of the media has brought together political economists, art historians, literature specialists, social theorists interested in technology and popular culture, and political scientists concerned with the power of global media. These may eventually coalesce into a new sub-field of global culture,<sup>13</sup> but this has clearly not happened. Nor would it seem likely that the wide range of scholars involved would come to recognize themselves as working in the same field or discipline. The new form of interdisciplinarity involves a sense of a world linked through networks in which multiple combinations of fields of knowledge are possible without any sovereign organization building some secure body of knowledge or discipline. This alternative is not like the Cold War era form of interdisciplinarity in which a unity of interdisciplinary knowledge of the international was constructed by the intervention in academe by the national security state. The new form is consistent with a university increasingly reliant on multiple patrons of its knowledge production—the state, individual corporations, nongovernmental organizations, tuition paid by students-as-consumers, among others. In short, the new interdisciplinarity seems consistent with the transformation of the university into an "entrepreneurial university" which must increasingly become itself part of networks of production and consumption.

This seems to parallel the challenges to international relations packed into the term *global*. As has often been remarked, knowledge of the global as distinct from the international is constructed more as network than powerful building. The different parts are not so much layered on one another as they are interwoven. Here it is useful to recall my initial discussion of interdisciplinarity as simultaneously a critical space within the university, given the politics and power

<sup>13</sup> For an argument that something of this sort is happening see Tomlinson (1999).



strategies operating on faculty in universities, and a strategy left open by the liberal arts university to adapt to change. For example, area studies would seem to flow easily into the new form of interdisciplinarity so long as they loosen the ideal of accumulating some unified understanding of a culture, state, or society. Area studies may be able to view political, social, economic, and, above all, cultural knowledge of a people, a state, or a region as mutual influences rather than as separate, autonomous pieces. This would allow recognition of the ways in which the local is constituted by the global networks in which it participates. This picture of the global is not of a building but of a network of influences, of fluid movements. In a sense, we could say that the knowledge of the global is a mapping of a hardwired world.

Significantly, beginning in the 1990s, global knowledge producers in the university are more and more nodal points, part of the global networks themselves. This is a result of more direct intervention in universities by private, global corporations, not only to produce a work force attuned to flexible production and global markets, but to produce directly new forms of knowledge that will enhance their own global competitiveness, productivity, and profit. Connected as well is the move to "entrepreneurial universities" that seek to develop their own sources of revenue from participating in global markets (patenting computer chip designs or genetic research, for example). I am not suggesting any causal relation between the new production of global knowledge and changing structure of the university. The roots of these transformations are neither congruent nor simple. Yet, the effects seem to be generating new forms of discipline and identity within the post-Cold War university.

Since the end of the Cold War, universities themselves are more and more becoming part of the network, rather than sites situated outside the networks in which privileged intellectuals and scientists pursue knowledge. The firewall between the economy and the academy seems to be crumbling. Note recent trends in the funding for natural science. During the Cold War, much of the funding in the natural sciences was for a general knowledge of basic science. Grants were generally open-ended and they encouraged a scientific identity as an objective investigator of basic, general truths (pure science).<sup>14</sup> This was true to some degree in the social sciences as well, although Cold War funding of social science research tended to create identities that both put pressure on the home discipline of grant recipients and created a new identity as state-academic whose research community moved fluidly between the university and the national security apparatus of the state. Increasingly, natural science funding for research is directly connected to specific corporations and their needs.<sup>15</sup>

In the social sciences, the trends toward academics as participants in the global networks they study are less advanced than for the natural sciences, but still the trends seem clear. More and more courses, for example, in fields related to global studies are being funded directly by corporations or private foundations concerned to produce players in the global economy. The intervention is quite direct, and these outside agents demand direct control and influence which would have been considered unacceptable during much of the Cold War.<sup>16</sup>

During the 1990s and up until the present time the disciplinary power of the university has come to imitate corporate models. Increasing costs together with declining government funding have also affected university restructuring, closing departments and realigning faculty affiliations. The corporate university has become more focused on generating economies of scale (through distance learning,<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Lewontin (1997).

<sup>15</sup> In addition to Lewontin, see Etzkowitz, Webster, and Healey (1998); and Slaughter and Leslie (1997).

<sup>16</sup> For three useful overviews see Press and Washburn (2000), Soley (1998); and Bromell (2002).

<sup>17</sup> This is at least the stated goal. For a critique see Schiller (1999).

"large-group instruction," outsourcing and increasing part-time employment), no doubt to make up in part for reductions in state funding. It is also focused on management practices associated with flexible, speed driven corporate accumulation, such as adoption of TQM, which enlists group "teamwork" in production linked to new, top-down assessment regimes.<sup>18</sup> This shift represents, whether self-consciously or not on the part of administrators and faculty, a shift in the focus of university knowledge production.

Global studies has become appealing in this new university. Its interdisciplinary character alone does not guarantee for it a critical character. Indeed, to the extent that global studies more efficiently generates grant money for the university, or produces graduates for the global job market (its students become consumers attracted to global studies because it will pay off in a better job), or generates consulting contracts or other forms of more direct corporate research or teaching funding, global studies will likely become a discipline within a restructured neoliberal university. Can global studies develop in an alternative, more critical direction? My concluding section tentatively explores one possibility by means of addressing another area of transformation in university education: its role in the constitution of citizenship.

### **The Crisis of University Knowledge: Citizenship and the Nation-State**

Few would question that knowledge and citizenship are close companions in modern states. The modern university creates a symmetry between two results of university knowledge: the graduate who contributes to the economy and the citizen who participates in the state. Both through course content and the structuring of student life more generally, universities and colleges comprise students as economic agents (installing the legitimacy of markets in the self, creating individuals anxious to compete against others, conveying sufficient knowledge to enable contributions to productivity and consumption on the part of students) and active citizens (attuning the self to a national narrative of identity, legitimating prevailing political institutions and generating obligations to participate in them according to their rules and norms, enabling sufficient critical awareness so that students will take responsibility for their political choices). Yet this symmetry cannot simply be assumed to result from university education. The ambiguities and openings in this gap between economic and political agency create conditions of possibility for interdisciplinary studies of the global.

The construction of citizenship in the university is not as straightforward as might be assumed. It is a complex, often highly contingent, social process. Citizens do not emerge full-blown from classes in government, American history, and Western civilization, contrary to the assumptions of neo-conservative critics of the "leftward bent" of the university. Creating citizens in the university is an active process of intervention on the part of the undergraduate experience as a whole.

Depending on how one defines citizenship—does citizenship comprise the agency by which persons contribute to the well-being of the state and community, or does it comprise the critical agency required of civic virtue, or the routinized patriotism of the depoliticized spectator—the focus must be on the different aspects of university life. One cannot simply attend to what is taught, as if content alone produces citizens. Moreover, the ambiguities of constituting citizenship in a global order cannot simply be glossed over by assuming that individuals will emerge out of the university as citizens of the national state.

The modern problematic of the liberal politics of university education has been to somehow close the gap between economic agency and liberal democratic citizenship. The narrative of the nation within a liberal arts curriculum has been the

<sup>18</sup> For an excellent global survey and critique see Bruneau and Savage (2002).

primary discursive strategy for doing so. As this strategy has become more troubled by globalization—not abandoned, to be sure—it is being replaced by an alternative strategy more attuned to the flexible accumulation of global economy, combined with a communitarian and voluntarist approach to social action, and a subsequent reduction of politics to governmentality. I want to suggest here that global studies can contribute an alternative to this currently emerging regime of the politics of university education.

The current regime of citizenship is becoming entrenched in higher education largely as a response to reduced government funding and the subsequent introduction of corporate methods and approaches to university governance. One result has been a new approach to the student as potential citizen in terms of a focus on "learning." Research faculties are under attack for spending too much time on research and not enough on teaching (as if these constitute an opposition in which teaching is to be favored). Showing up in undergraduate mission statements is the key phrase "the student as learner"; and (in the case of my own university) a redefinition of the university as a "learner-centered institution." "The student as learner" is an ambiguous phrase, broad and sufficiently underspecified to be of use to administrations who demand flexibility in a precarious age of underfunded universities and conflicting economic and political demands. In this it usefully (from the rationalizing view of administration) parallels the discourse of "excellence."<sup>19</sup> This shift reflects the shift to a self more ambiguously situated in the world in which she participates; neither public nor private moorings are secure. Students must come out of the university as "life-long learners" because of the scarcity of durable career-oriented jobs within "flexible accumulation" capitalism. They must become flexible and adaptable selves. Learning, we are told, is a process, not so much a matter of substantive knowledge. At the same time the student is encouraged by the high cost of university education and the precarious job market to view themselves as consumers of education. Hence, not only has there been a proliferation of vocationally oriented undergraduate programs even in liberal arts universities, but general education programs have taken a "skills approach," incorporating "critical thinking" and computer skills along with, and sometimes in place of, traditional orientations toward the accumulation of basic knowledge. Social responsibility increasingly means being able to solve problems and be flexibly adaptable to whatever the economy demands from you.

"Student as learner" reveals a crisis in the political role of university knowledge, especially in undergraduate liberal arts education. No longer is symmetry between the graduate and the citizen to be assumed. It can no longer be assumed that the graduate will emerge as a citizen loyal to the nation-state as she becomes an economic agent and socially responsible self. I want to suggest that interdisciplinary global studies can play an important role in producing a more democratic alternative to the regime in which the student emerges from the university as a depoliticized self attuned to navigate their personal fortunes in the global economy and, when possible, to volunteer in community service. It is well situated to do so because it refuses to take the reconstitution of citizenship in neoliberalism as inevitable (the citizen as consumer and as adaptable, self-reliant agent of the flexible-accumulation economy). Nor does it naively assume the continued relevance of civic education models of citizenship, even those sensitive to multiculturalism such as those of Martha Nussbaum and Amy Guttmann. Global studies can take a leading role in refashioning, and reinvigorating, a *political* citizenship. To understand this possibility we need to revisit the theory of how university education produces citizenship.

The "nation" is a site of ambivalence.<sup>20</sup> This is certainly the case of its production in the university. On the one side is the pedagogy of national experience,

<sup>19</sup> For an important critique of the discourse of "excellence" along these lines see Readings (1997).

<sup>20</sup> This paragraph draws on Bhabha (1994).

events, and the linear time of national identity, along with the geographically, demographically, and linguistically bounded space of collective experience. On the other, the nation is produced in the university as a narrative performance; the nation is an effect of the stories courses tell. That is, it does not inhere in any straightforward or simple way in any of the specific pedagogy of the nation in the various disciplines and courses students take. The nation as subject and identity emerges in the synthetic spaces students inhabit as their experiences come together in a curriculum. The narrative of the nation must create the possibility of the state acting in the world as a singular secure agent. It must be remembered that in the age of the nation-state, security has always been a matter of securing the trope of the nation as a singular subject; nation-state security rests not only on weapons and military force, but on producing in the culture more generally a narrative that makes the nation as singular subject into a component of the common sense of everyday life.

During the Cold War, as university education became a staple of the middle class and as its availability spread to the working class and minority groups, the university came to play an increasing role in producing this narrative strategy. It certainly continued, and continues, to constitute a political and economic elite as the modern university system has traditionally done. But with the democratization of access to university education, especially the rise of public universities in the United States (and the creation and generalizing of the polytechnics in Britain, for another example), along with state funded scholarship programs (the GI Bill in the United States perhaps being the most important), difficulties emerged for the traditional ideological regime for producing citizenship in the university. General education programs continued to promote the elite literary and philosophical canons of "the Western tradition," along with significant doses of Western history, but by the early 1970s some universities began to drop or severely loosen the requirements of their general education programs altogether, or came at least to pepper these with diverse forms of literature and area studies. Interdisciplinary programs in Women's Studies, Black Studies, and soon after Cultural Studies emerged which implicitly, and many times explicitly, challenged the Eurocentric biases of traditional programs.

Yet it would be a mistake to read this development as either undermining the production of citizenship in the university, as the Right argues, or replacing Eurocentrism and ethnocentrism with a new "multiculturalism."<sup>21</sup> These both make the mistake of assuming that citizenship emerges as a result of particular courses and curriculum rather than as an effect of the university more generally as a space of knowledge production.

In the university, the nation is given its being as collective subject through its intersections and movements between and among the various disciplines, through the interstices of the various courses students take and the extra-curricular activities in which they engage. As Homi Bhabha describes, the "nation" is a narrative performance, not an essence which exists prior to the discourses of which it is constituted.<sup>22</sup> The synthetic power of a liberal arts curriculum, not any specific courses or course content, produced the national citizen. Furthermore, the curriculum did not do this alone; it connected to a more general institutionalization of values in the college and university experience which reinforced the commitment to the distinctiveness and priority of the Western experience, especially its values of rationalism, individualism, and, most often, masculine camaraderie. Coursework in the individual disciplines of the liberal arts are to connect to one another to produce students as unified subjects and free agents. An "outcome" of the liberal arts curriculum is to be the modern democratic subject, the

<sup>21</sup> See Readings (1997:chap. 7).

<sup>22</sup> Bhabha (1994).

self-willing, autonomous agent who chooses his own life plan, and makes reasoned and reasonable choices in their private and public lives. Along with the content of the specific liberal arts courses, the interpolation of a specific set of disciplines, both academic and personal (deadlines, attendance, seminar participation, etc.), produces citizenship as its effect.

My point is that the "nation" is constructed in complex ways in the liminal spaces of the university. This is the case as well for other discursive strategies which would replace the national narrative as the core of citizenship. Such discursive regimes are contingent and temporally complex. They operate through (inside and outside) specific courses, within general education curriculums, major disciplines, governance institutions, sports teams, dormitory regimens, fraternities and sororities, extra-curricular clubs, and so on. Significantly, the nation has always been only one of a number of possible collective identities working in this liminal space. Cosmopolitan, multicultural, feminist identities and others operate in these spaces within the university. Moreover, none is easily separated from others. In the context of the Cold War, the priority of the national narrative as constitutive of the synthetic power of the liberal arts curriculum seemed natural. Less so in the current condition. The nation-narrative must struggle to constitute itself. How has globalization altered the ways in which the nation can be produced in the more interdisciplinary context of the post-Cold War university? The citizenship implications of the liberal arts curriculum are being transformed by the new neoliberal university.

Global studies does not guarantee progressive answers to questions of politics and the self. Interdisciplinary studies aimed at multiculturalism and overcoming ethnocentrism and Eurocentrism problematize, but do not in themselves eliminate, the narrative of the nation and citizenship as an effect of that narrative, from playing a central role in the university. Nor, necessarily, should they. Global studies may rationalize a new regime of neoliberal citizenship just as easily as it may encourage more democratic and politically vibrant alternatives. It must be remembered that while these interdisciplinary programs open space for critical alternatives, they are also made possible by neoliberal globalization and its effect on the university.

### Conclusion

Interdisciplinary programs in global studies operate in a contested space of uncertainties and ambivalence as the structure of the university is transformed by globalization. In this article I have tried to warn against seeing the subject matter of global studies, and its debates with more traditional international studies, as isolated from the changing structure of the university on the one hand and neoliberal globalization on the other.

The mission of the university, its nature and purpose as an institution, is uncertain; some argue the university is facing a major crisis of relevance. Globalization conditions that uncertainty. Global studies can play a role in contesting the corporatization of the university and the further de-politicization of citizenship and instrumentalization of knowledge which neoliberal globalization is pressing on the university. Introducing the global into studies of the world does not guarantee a critical result, just as introducing multiculturalism against ethnocentrism may just as easily rationalize neoliberal globalization as it does create more tolerant and politically progressive politics.

In this article I urge practitioners of global studies to be aware of the context in which they teach and do research, that they engage, along with debates within the emerging "discipline" of global studies, in debates about the political implications of knowledge production in late modernity, and especially the implications of the changing structure of the university and higher education.

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