In the U.S. South, where race has long been configured as a bipolar divide between black and white, the large influx of new immigrants has far-reaching implications. Analysis of these transformations is now available in reports from a four-year collaborative project involving the Center for Research on Women (CROW) and two partners, the Highlander Research and Education Center and the Southern Regional Council.

The overall goal of the project, *Across Races and Nations: Building New Communities in the U.S. South*, was to identify areas of potential conflict as well as collaboration among different racial/ethnic groups, and to encourage multiracial efforts to address common needs. The project combined community-based research with popular education to investigate and influence changing racial/ethnic dynamics occasioned by immigration from Latin America.

NAFTA Symposium Draws International Participation

“Trading Justice: NAFTA’s New Links and Conflicts,” a transnational symposium sponsored by CROW and the Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change, will be held on March 24-26, 2005 on the campus of the University of Memphis. The event will showcase scholarship about the impacts of NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement) in the three countries that are signatories to the pact.

At the opening plenary on Thursday, March 24, Drs. Isidro Morales...
Immigration is testing the veterans and heirs of the southern civil rights movement. The arrival of people from all over the world, above all Latin America, is setting in motion contentious negotiations in activist organizations as well as workplaces and neighborhoods all over the region.

The process is not easy. Among social justice activists, many of whom trace their lineage to the southern civil rights movement, the implications of immigration for organizational priorities and strategies are not necessarily clear.

Can “racial justice” or “civil rights” encompass the demands and goals of diverse people of color in this region? Should it? On what bases might African American Southerners in particular unite with new arrivals, especially working-class Latino immigrants?

In 2000, CROW, along with the Southern Regional Council and the Highlander Center, launched the Across Races and Nations project in order to answer such questions by analyzing the prospects for conflict and collaboration between Latino immigrants and native Southerners.

We soon learned that the conflict and collaboration we sought to study was manifested in our own social justice organizations no less than in other settings.

The decision to devote scarce organizational resources to Latino immigrants when many white and especially black working-class Southerners were in crisis was a source of debate and in some instances even sharp disagreement.

Tensions over access to jobs emerged in our own employment decisions. Should the next staff hire be a bilingual Latino immigrant, or a seasoned African American organizer?

The legal insecurities that confront immigrants, especially in the wake of September 11, also afflicted the new immigrants on our staffs. The results were unwarranted detentions, legal disputes, and difficulties re-entering the United States after visits to family.

And then there was the matter of race—or, more accurately, race, ethnicity, citizenship, immigration status and national origin, a complicated tangle of factors that made the South’s black-white racial paradigm appear simple, though hardly more desirable.

For many Latino immigrant staff, citizenship and immigration status seemed by far the most immediate and powerful determinants of their social position. For U.S.-born staff, however, especially African Americans, relatively light-skinned immigrants’ simultaneous downplay of race and stress on U.S. citizenship as a primary form of privilege was unpersuasive, even offensive.

These and many other tensions, which we both documented among others and experienced ourselves, repeatedly challenged us to clarify why we considered the inclusion of new immigrants so important to the future of social justice in the South. Was this a matter of self-interest, the pragmatic need to maximize strength through numbers? Or were there deeper issues at stake?

Indeed, there are. Immigration is challenging activists all over the South to define the living meaning of the southern civil rights struggle. Does the legacy of this great social movement demand...
The deeper that I delved into this book on labor organizing in the borderlands the more valuable I found it. In *The Children of NAFTA: Labor Wars on the U.S./Mexico Border*, David Bacon has woven together a set of case studies that provide an inspiring, accessible and informative account of the impact of the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement on workers in the borderlands, and worker efforts to resist the oppressive conditions that the pact has encouraged.

Clearly written and jargon-free, Bacon’s account of post-NAFTA struggles is enhanced by his two decades of experience organizing immigrant workplaces. As an associate editor of Pacific News Service, Bacon has produced a “Labor and the Global Economy” show aired on KPFA in Berkeley, California, for which he initially did the reporting and interviews for several of the chapters in the book. These narratives take the reader into plants and onto the picket line, providing worker and activists’ perspectives on the structural transformations that free trade has wrought in manufacturing and agribusiness in borderlands like Tijuana and Mexicali.

Bacon opens the book with a quick overview of the rise and decline of the United Farm Workers union in California from the 1960s-1980s, as seen through the eyes of a farmworker family. He then documents the rise of child labor in Baja, California in the 1990s as U.S. and Mexican growers took advantage of NAFTA’s investment incentives, forming joint ventures to grow green onions south of the border in a formerly arid valley.

The second chapter offers a helpful history and overview of Mexico’s economic crisis and the passage of NAFTA, with careful documentation of the ways that the pact has greased the wheels of multinational companies investing in cross-border operations at the expense of citizens and workers’ rights. In a later chapter, Bacon takes a close-up look at a decade of struggles that have ensued in Mexico over privatization in multiple sectors – from agriculture to mining, buses and the ports. It is striking how dependent on the maquila industry Mexico now employs a tenth of the country’s workforce and the sector is second only to oil revenues as a source of foreign revenue.

The heart of this book traces labor battles fueled by the rampant growth of the maquila industry in the Tijuana area as U.S. companies fled the American heartland after NAFTA’s passage, achieving 10-fold reductions in wages. The bi-national fervor to facilitate cross-border industries triggered massive downward pressure on wages and abuses of civil rights, occupational health and safety standards and environmental laws.

Bacon takes readers into crowded cardboard houses perched on muddy hillsides below the plants, where migrant families, having lost their rural livelihoods (as Mexico phases out protections for the *ejido*, or communally held farm land), now subsist. They

*continued on page 11*
REDEFINING “MINORITY”


In southern states like Georgia, where legally sanctioned African American disfranchisement is a living memory to many political activists and the struggle for civil rights continues, immigration and racial/ethnic diversification are transforming the political landscape. Demands for immigrant rights at times meet the struggle for racial justice uneasily, not only because domestic groups of color may question immigrant claims to race-specific protections and remedies, but also because immigrants do not necessarily define themselves in racial terms.

Once in the U.S., however, immigrant ethnicity and national origin are redefined, becoming “racialized” by color-conscious classification schemes and the racist reactions of dominant whites. Latinos in Georgia and elsewhere experience problems commonly understood in the U.S. as racial discrimination, such as racial profiling and barriers to education, health services, political participation, and employment. However, the multiple elements of immigrants’ status—citizenship, language, documentation of entry, and legal employment status, as well as the more commonly recognized hierarchy of race, class and gender—place them in a complicated relationship to the race-specific policies that grew out of the civil rights movement.

These policies typically target individual members of certain “minority” groups, understood to have been historically excluded from access to key resources, for remedial action. The legal definition of minority functions in such contexts as a gate that admits some groups and excludes others. Legislative and executive action to establish or change the parameters of “minority” can become a flashpoint for intense conflicts over race, ethnicity, historical disadvantage and the appropriate role of government.

Moreover, diversification through immigration is occurring simultaneously with determined assaults on both the gains of the civil rights movement and the rights of immigrants, interrelated trends that raise the stakes for multi-racial/ethnic coalitions. Who should benefit from race-specific remedies like affirmative action? On what bases and around what issues might civil rights advocates in Georgia unite with more recently arrived people of color?

The Struggle over “Minority” in Georgia

Repeated political efforts to limit African American business owners’ access to state contracts form the backdrop for a 2001 legislative initiative in Georgia to expand the state’s legal definition of minority. In the context of a measure to amend the state’s legal definition of minority. In the context of a measure to amend a provision that gives a small tax break to companies receiving state contracts that subcontract...
Across Races and Nations: Partner Profiles

Highlander Research and Education Center

Highlander is a residential popular education center in East Tennessee. Its mission is to support the building of movements for economic justice and democratic participation, with a focus on those groups that have been marginalized or experienced systematic discrimination. Since 1932, Highlander has convened community people at its folk school in Tennessee to share the stories of their struggles and create strategies for resistance and change.

In the early years, Highlander’s focus was on low-wage workers and farmers, followed by an intense period of participation in the development of the civil rights movement (particularly through the Citizenship Schools). During the 1970s, Highlander entered an Appalachian period with a strong emphasis on environmental issues; more recently, the organization has focused on regional economic issues related to the increasingly global economy.

Southern Regional Council

The Atlanta-based Southern Regional Council (SRC) works to promote racial justice, protect democratic rights and broaden civic participation in twelve states in the South. Founded in 1919 as the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, SRC’s work for democracy has fostered racial understanding, reform of public schools and increased representation for African American voters.

SRC’s participation in the Across Races and Nations project was part of its ongoing research program, which produces policy-relevant analyses in such areas as political representation and economic inequality. Through strong ties to public officials, particularly African American leaders and their allies, SRC influences policy outcomes across the region.

Center for Research on Women

The Center for Research on Women is an interdisciplinary unit at the University of Memphis that conducts, promotes and disseminates research on women and social inequality. Founded in 1982, CROW emphasizes an integrative (race-class-gender) approach to social inequality. Through action-oriented, community-based research, CROW seeks to influence social policies and institutional practices that affect the well-being of women of diverse racial/ethnic and class backgrounds. CROW sponsors programs on campus and in the Memphis community on topics related to its mission, and fosters interdisciplinary research among scholars who seek to illuminate the connections among race, class, gender and sexuality, particularly in the U.S. South.
CONFLICT AND COMMUNITY-BUILDING IN THE APPALCHIAN SOUTH

Hamblen County lies in the Tennessee River Valley of Appalachian East Tennessee, nestled between the Cumberland Mountains to the northwest and the Great Smokies to the south. Although its agricultural history remains visible in farms and expanses of green countryside, Hamblen County’s employment base lies above all in manufacturing, which began to develop in the first half of the twentieth century. The lack of unions, low wages, and overwhelmingly white population (95% as of the 1990 census) have been consistent draws to manufacturers of apparel, hosiery, paper, plastics and other goods.

Over the past two decades, deindustrialization and capital flight to yet lower wage areas hit Morristown’s apparel and furniture workers in particular; automation and ownership changes decreased job opportunities in the rayon plants; and contingent employment practices meant that workers who lost their jobs had to apply for new positions (in some cases even the same positions) through temporary agencies rather than a personnel office. From January 2000 through August 2002, total employment in the county dropped by almost five percent, and manufacturing jobs declined even more steeply—by 14 percent.

This economic tumult and insecurity are fundamental to understanding local reactions to the large influx of Latino immigrants, which began in the 1990s. By the time of the 2000 census, the Latino population of Hamblen County had ballooned by 1,785%, outnumbering the small but longstanding black population and becoming almost 6% of the county’s residents in the space of ten years. The new arrivals were predominantly foreign-born (77%), and most originated from Mexico.

Today, there are many cultural indicators of the sizeable Latino presence in Hamblen County and East Tennessee more generally. Morristown now has three Mexican grocery stores within several blocks of each other, as well as new Mexican restaurants catering to Latinos. Spanish-speaking residents can now listen to a Spanish radio station that covers the East Tennessee area from Knoxville to Johnson City (which includes Hamblen County), and read a Spanish newspaper Mundo Hispano. "For Rent" signs on apartment buildings now appear in Spanish, and ads for car dealers, video rental stores, check cashing services and other businesses increasingly note a capacity to speak Spanish as part of their marketing pitch.

However, white workers in particular have responded with hostility toward new immigrants in Hamblen County. Although their activism has featured some symbolic trappings of the South, such as Confederate flags, the ideology that frames this protest draws strength from decidedly national themes in conservative thought. These include the pairing...
of whiteness with 
American identity, 
a class resentment 
that defines the "real" Americans as "working people," and a militant nationalism 
that is combined with disdain for the established government. 
In short, white antipathy toward Latino immigrants in Hamblen County is neither exclusively racist nor distinctively southern. Rather, it derives from a larger ideology that is all the more powerful because of its acceptable appeal to a nationalism that disguises white supremacy within imagery of an embattled America. This perspective has been encouraged both by governmental action at the federal level and local hate groups.

**Anti-Immigrant Activity**

In 1995, just as immigration to Hamblen County and East Tennessee more generally escalated sharply, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service announced Operation South P.A.W. (for "Protecting American Workers"), a brief and largely symbolic series of raids to enforce immigration laws in the interior South. The Knoxville newspaper reported that "legal residents of the region, angry over losing jobs to illegal aliens, stood in the streets and cheered the [INS] agents on." This action clearly reinforced existing perceptions of Latino immigrants as economic threats, while doing nothing effective to "protect American workers" and their jobs.

More recently, on the heels of September 11, 2001, the Tennessee White Knights of Yahweh announced plans for a January 19 rally at the courthouse in neighboring Cocke County to celebrate the birthday of Confederate General Robert E. Lee and to protest the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. A pamphlet promoting the event called for closing the nation’s borders “before the hordes of American hating foreigners pollute and destroy your community. We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children.”

In response, a number of local groups in Cocke County planned a diversity event at the high school to counter the Klan’s message of hate and fear. Others felt it was important to protest directly and visibly at the Klan rally, and to mobilize a large crowd to come to the courthouse. On the day of the rally, despite a huge rainstorm, about 50 Klansmen, outnumbered by over 150 state troopers and police, faced off against

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**Earnings, Income and Poverty, 1999**

**Hamblen County, Tennessee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>White</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Median Earnings of Full-Time, Year Round Workers</td>
<td>$12,280</td>
<td>$23,682</td>
<td>$26,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Family Income</td>
<td>$23,850</td>
<td>$32,763</td>
<td>$40,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Rate</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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*continued on page 16*
Efforts to create alliances between Latinos and other Southerners, particularly working class whites and African Americans, are fraught with potential obstacles: racial/ethnic rivalry over job access; language barriers; limited knowledge of one another’s history and present dilemmas; employer actions that foment racial/ethnic division; and situational differences between new immigrants seeking economic opportunity and groups that have long experienced race discrimination and/or economic exploitation in the U.S.

Nonetheless, collaborative efforts are springing up all over the South. The following case study describes the multi-racial/ethnic collaboration, involving primarily Latino immigrants and African American Southerners, between Black Workers for Justice (BWFJ) and the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC).

Black Workers for Justice is a community-based organization that unites workers to fight for their rights in the workplace as well as for justice in their communities. Focused on the South, BWFJ has offices in North Carolina and Georgia.

The Farm Labor Organizing Committee has been organizing the overwhelmingly Latino workforce on the cucumber farms of eastern North Carolina to attain union recognition, higher wages and better working conditions. It also launched a national boycott of Mt. Olive Pickles, which has received wide support among faith-based, racial justice and labor organizations.

The two organizations have teamed up to combat tensions between African American and Latino workers and build unity across racial/ethnic differences. Problems have been particularly evident in the southern poultry processing industry, where both African Americans and Latinos are employed. Recognizing that the primary beneficiaries of such divisions are employers, FLOC and BWFJ have organized “Black-Brown Freedom Schools” at which participants build relationships by sharing their histories and struggles as individuals and as families.

**Background**

Black Workers for Justice was founded in 1981, the outgrowth of a labor struggle at a K-Mart store in Rocky Mount, North Carolina in which three black women were fired for challenging race discrimination. The organization emphasizes the importance of black workers’ leadership in creating a southern labor movement and, more generally, a movement for social justice in the U.S.

BWFJ combines workplace organizing and support for workers’ rights with attention to issues such as voting rights, which affect the broader African American community. BWFJ also educates about and advocates for workers’ issues in community contexts such as churches and civil rights groups.

Similarly, the Farm Labor Organizing...
Committee focuses at both the workplace and community levels in organizing and building support for farm workers. FLOC was founded in 1967 by farm worker Baldemar Velasquez, who led its initial organizing efforts among workers on tomato farms in Ohio.

Recognizing that large corporate processors of agricultural products were key to growers’ earnings and labor policies, FLOC targeted farmers who held contracts with Campbell’s Soup. A seven-year strike finally brought contracts covering numerous tomato and pickle farms in Michigan and Ohio, after which FLOC turned to North Carolina. FLOC’s combination of consumer boycotts, broader services to the Latino community (ESL classes, legal clinics, etc.) and workplace organizing is similar to the strategy of BWFJ.

The two organizations joined to promote unity among black and Latino workers in the face of tremendous Latino population growth in North Carolina and the prospects of racial/ethnic division. Their chief obstacles have included language barriers and the constant need for translation/interpretation, the difficulty in sustaining participation among seasonal workers who are often confined to the grower’s property, and the great diversity (in nationality, ethnic identity, class background, etc.) among Latinos themselves. African American workers, by contrast, typically share a lengthy history in the U.S. South and a potentially unifying racial identity.

Despite such obstacles, the collaboration claims success in building alliances across racial/ethnic lines. Participants attribute their success in part to the two organizations’ similar strategies and constituencies (social or community unionism among workers) as well as the leadership’s genuine dedication to multi-racial/ethnic solidarity. “It is a lifetime commitment,” commented Velasquez. ♦

Larry Downey (left) agreed to cut Eusebio’s hair for free at his Juniper Street barber shop after eating two free tacos at Eusebio’s grill next door. (Photo from the Southern Short Course in News Photography.)
Immigration Transforms the South
continued from page 1

America in particular. The resulting reports explore both the experiences of new immigrants as they arrive in and adapt to the South, and the attitudes of more long-term residents toward new immigrants.

Each of the three participating organizations approached the project within a distinctive racial/ethnic and organizational context. Memphis, where CROW is located, is the “capital of the Delta” and reflects the historically bipolar racial context of the Deep South. Highlander is located in East Tennessee, a predominantly rural, white working class Appalachian context, while SRC is headquartered in the burgeoning multi-racial/ethnic megalopolis of Atlanta. Each of the three sites thus represents in effect a different “case study” of Latino immigration to the South. Each of the organizations also has a distinctive mission that influenced its approach to the project.

CROW’s interest in Across Races and Nations arose initially from concern for the implications of Latino immigration in Memphis, a majority-black, predominantly working class city, and the Deep South more generally. In this sub-region where racial oppression, contention and resistance have dominated public life, the arrival of large numbers of people who do not fit within the bipolar black-white paradigm disrupts racial patterns in ways that are potentially volatile as well as promising. Although tension between African Americans and Latinos, focused on jobs, work relations, crime and other issues is already evident, there are also signs of multi-racial/ethnic community building and collective workplace resistance.

Begun in the spring of 2000, Across Races and Nations received significant funding from the Ford Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation. The University of Memphis also provided support via a Professional Development Assignment (sabbatical) for CROW director Barbara Ellen Smith, who served as project director.

This special double issue of StandPoint (fall 2004-spring 2005) profiles critical findings from the Across Races and Nations project. CROW director Smith commented, “We dedicate this newsletter to the many Southerners who have participated in the long journey toward racial justice, including those who work today to affirm the rights and aspirations of new immigrants.”

Eyes on the Prize, Feet on the Ground
continued from page 2

that we attend exclusively to the enduring problem of anti-black racism in the region? Or does it require that the promise of justice encompass all people, regardless of racial/ethnic identity, immigration status and national origin?

It can only be the latter. Repeatedly, the transcendent values of the civil rights movement helped us transform internal tensions not into lasting divisions, but deeper solidarities.

Indeed, the movement’s radical vision of an egalitarian and inclusive democracy continues, against all odds, to guide and inspire activism across the region. In the wake of the 2004 presidential election, when a certain version of values and morality triumphed in the nation’s voting booths, it is more important than ever to reclaim this powerful moral legacy.

White Southerners have led this nation into a wilderness of violence and fear. But I continue to believe that other Southerners, like those of generations past, can help turn us toward the Promised Land.
Book Review

continued from page 3

alternate sleeping shifts and piece together $6-per-day salaries in an effort to keep tortillas and beans on the table.

In an extensive account of the famous Han Young strike at a Korean-owned assembly factory for Hyundai, Bacon shows how companies and the Mexican government manipulated workers who exposed a variety of health and safety violations at the plant. Management found a reliable ally in Mexico’s officially sanctioned but corrupt union bureaucracy. Dating from Mexico’s years of nationalist development, most company-controlled unions have worker representatives paid by management, and few hold democratic elections or negotiate bargaining agreements. At Han Young, the company union, backed by Tijuana SWAT teams, engaged directly in “union-busting” tactics, using violence and fraud to thwart efforts to establish independent worker organizations.

In two chapters on cross-border organizing, Bacon shows how organizers learned bitter lessons about trusting the empty rhetoric of NAFTA’s labor side agreement, which proved to have toothless enforcement. Ironically, however, through challenging the Clinton Administration to live up to the promise of the side agreement, he traces a difficult but successful immigrant-dominated union drive in the meatpacking industry following two decades of union-busting, wage cuts and deskilling. He argues that successes of this type are transforming American labor, and that the AFL-CIO under Sweeney’s leadership has begun to distance itself from the anti-immigrant and racist positions of the Cold War era.

In Mexico we follow immigrant organizer Tony Castillo home to Michoacán, the birthplace of the country’s famous land reform, as he works with the PRD, the country’s leftwing opposition party, to undermine the longstanding stranglehold of the ruling PRI party, which finally did lose control of the presidency in 2000. Bacon shows the important role that disenfranchised maquiladora workers played in the rise of the PRD’s political fortunes, including winning the mayorship of Mexico City in the mid-1990s.

Bacon’s years in journalism have helped him produce a book that strikes a rare balance between ethnographic detail and clear historical and political analysis. Some scholars will be disappointed by the absence of complete citations for the many critical economic studies on the socioeconomic status of workers Bacon quotes; however, he does list key non-governmental organizations doing research on cross-border issues, which he relies on in his introduction, and the index is well cross-referenced.

While some accounts require a close reading to follow the strategic play-by-play, Bacon should be commended for avoiding the arcane alphabet soup that tends to plague writings on both organized labor and Mexican politics. The realistic accounts of working conditions, combined with the sheer audacity of company and state tactics to thwart organizing, make for convincing reading for students unfamiliar with labor struggle. It’s an especially good choice for university courses that deal with contemporary Mexico, Latino community building, or neo-liberal globalization and the workplace.
Teaching the Sociology of International Development: Inequality and Social Justice

~by Stephen J. Scanlan, Assistant Professor of Sociology, CROW Faculty Affiliate

In the post 9/11 world the number of students taking an interest in global issues has surged. One of my greatest pleasures and challenges is providing an outlet for such inquiry by teaching the Sociology of International Development—an undergraduate course that explores global inequalities in their many forms.

I take great pleasure in teaching this course because of my interest in and commitment to understanding the most important issues that have shaped and continue to define the complex world in which we live. For example, from the legacy of colonialism and slavery in the classic sense to their appearance in the modern world system in such new forms as human trafficking and sweatshop or exploited labor, inequality and social justice remain as pertinent to academic debates today as ever.

Given the intense interconnectedness of the world through globalization in its many forms, each of us is tied intimately to international development in every aspect of our lives, from the clothes on our backs, to the food we consume and the cars we drive. The wide range of topics central to international development makes each semester a new adventure.

And with that come the challenges of teaching such a course. Traditional perspectives on contemporary societies, such as modernization theory, dependency and world systems models, techno-ecological viewpoints, Malthusianism, and democratic peace ideas, among others, remain integral to understanding international development, but they take new and evolving forms. Issues such as the ecological well-being of the planet, hunger, immigration, the international political economy, population dynamics, war, work and numerous other global concerns persist in importance, but through time exhibit different faces in new places, with shifting and increasingly interconnected causation and consequences.

Presenting the multifaceted dynamics of international development to students who for the most part have limited background in comparative sociology intensifies the challenges. And yet, this is also a source of excitement in teaching such a course, often making pleasure and challenge one and the same.

On the first day of each new term I give my students a “quiz” to test their literacy with regard to development, global issues, geography, international leaders and so forth, and each time they “fail” miserably. The exercise is not an effort to discourage students or weed out the weak, but instead to challenge them from the start to commit themselves seriously to increased global awareness and a more cosmopolitan view of the world.

From the beginning of the term I also seek to cultivate an interest among students about their own place in international development and their connections to such processes as globalization. One key exercise involves breaking students into groups to conduct a “country inventory” from the clothes they are wearing, the backpacks they are carrying, and the calculators, cell phones,
Students are always amazed when several dozen countries are listed on the chalkboard—most of which are unfamiliar to them. They begin to understand global concerns not just through new issues, theories and methods, but also in critical assessments of their own roles and what can be done to elicit positive social change.

One cannot study international development without addressing the global inequalities that are at its core. In introducing inequality I use a simple class exercise that incorporates something very dear to many students—candy. With a deck of cards, a small vending machine size bag of candy, and a large store-bought bag of candy (M&M’s work great), students get a snapshot of the state of inequality in the world.

Those who draw kings and queens from the deck have access to the big bag of candy, while everyone else has to share one small bag. Depending on the class size I trim the deck so that approximately 20 percent of the students will be kings and queens—roughly the percentage of people living in the more industrialized global “north.” The candy, of course, can represent a number of things—access to education or health care, energy consumption, food, income, wealth, etc.—all of which exhibit global inequalities. The inevitable protests arise from the 80 percent in the global “South” and a bloodless coup typically forces a more equitable distribution of global goods.

Building on this, the class examines many forms of inequality but focuses on race, class and gender. From globalization and competing theories of international development to more specific topics, such as the global AIDS pandemic, democratization and human rights, hunger, international migration, the global assembly line, sustainable development, terrorism and violent conflict, students examine inequalities within as well as differences between countries. To illustrate, gender inequality exists within every country around the world in that women on average have lower earnings and less access to positions of power, but on average women in Norway fare better than women in the United States, who fare better than women in Mexico and so forth.

In this regard students learn to consider the relative nature of inequality, typically drawing comparisons between the United States, with which they are most familiar, and the rest of the world. Using data from Internet sources, the World Bank and other international agencies, as well as what the students collect in their cupboards and closets at home, they learn to analyze and think critically about global inequality and development in exercises and short projects.

Students develop an awareness of the severity of global inequality, its influence in the numerous issues that we examine, and its consequences for the life chances of the world’s citizens. They come to see that deforestation is not just about ecology but culture, global economics, and the often desperate survival of indigenous peoples; terrorism becomes linked to inequality in access to legitimate political channels or the denial of economic opportunities to certain groups in various societies; and high population growth may be traced to limited economic development and unequal access to education and employment opportunities for the world’s women.

Studying international development in light of inequality is often not easy continued on page 14
Teaching Column

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for students to stomach, nor do they automatically accept its realities. Short of traveling to the developing world, one of the best ways I can exhibit the challenges of international development is through film.

“Baraka,” for example, is a wonderful visual window into the dynamics of social change and the fragile balance of ecology, modernization, and development, which I show at the beginning of the course. Another resource, the documentary series titled “City Life,” provides snapshots of a multitude of issues from hunger and trafficking, to urbanization and the plight of Palestinian refugees.

I have also found that visual media do not have to communicate “gloom and doom” to make the point—Dr. Seuss’s “The Butter Battle Book,” “The Sneetches” and “The Lorax” are great for addressing the Cold War, ethnic conflict, and sustainable development in whimsical but critical ways.

It is difficult to learn of hundreds of thousands of people dying in a genocide that could have been prevented, or in a famine created by politics, or a “food war.” It is discomforting for students to see that so many of the world’s citizens have little while they comparatively have so much, even though they might struggle themselves to get by. They are horrified at the world’s children being sold into sexual slavery, working their way out of debt bondage, fighting many of the world’s civil wars, or picking through garbage landfills to survive on what they can eat or sell.

However, it is in becoming more aware and being moved to comprehend the challenges of international development that students are able to question whether present inequalities are inevitable. That is, they begin to question the injustice of it all, perhaps even contemplating their role in the perpetuation of global inequalities tied to international development.

They begin to examine the labels on their T-shirts and sneakers, and question the origins of the coffee in their mug. Using theories and actual data, students are empowered to inquire how to extend the academic to activist and policy fronts.

In this manner learning extends well beyond the classroom, and students who had little understanding of the world become able to pursue global awareness and social change long after the course has ended. Their commitment to social justice may take the form of boycotting a retailer because of sweatshop labor, attending a rally against the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas, or organizing a teach-in on sustainable development.

Certainly not everyone “gets it,” or perhaps even cares that inequality is so prevalent in the world. Further, some do not believe that anything can be done to address the issues we examine. What is most important, however, is that students learn to think about and ask the questions that matter regarding interconnections and injustices in our world. For me as a teacher, little offers greater pleasure or challenge.

Students begin to question the injustice of it all.
As we recognized Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October, data from the Memphis Police Department and the Shelby County Sheriff’s Office reminded us that fourteen local homicides during the past twelve months were directly related to domestic violence. Most victims were women.

Despite a reduction in the number and proportion of domestic homicides in Memphis in the last several years – down from 25-30% of all homicides in the early and mid-1990s to less than 14% from 1998 through 2002 – fourteen is too many. What is more, the strategies that may have contributed to progress may soon be undermined.

The Shelby County District Attorney General credits a grant-funded domestic violence prosecution unit and specialized domestic violence court for some of that reduction. The court, however, will be phased out in January. With the current judge stepping down – the special courtroom is a voluntary assignment – none of the (elected) judges has volunteered to take her place. To his credit, District Attorney General Bill Gibbons has absorbed the cost of the special prosecutors, but there are several aspects of “the way the system works” that remain troubling.

What can we at CROW do to make sure that the courts maintain a focus on domestic violence in Memphis when the specialized court disappears? How can we ensure that women and their children are not left unprotected when jurisdictional issues make it difficult for them to get an order of protection if divorce proceedings are pending in another court? These and other policies and practices are the focus of a new Memphis Area Women’s Council initiative.

CROW has always been action-oriented on behalf of women and social justice, but our recent partnership with the University of Tennessee Health Sciences Center Institute for Women’s Health and the Women’s Foundation for a Greater Memphis has taken our commitment to a new level. Together with representatives from other organizations and a diverse group of community activists, we have established the Memphis Area Women’s Council (MAWC) as an agent for social change.

MAWC emphasizes local action to change policies and practices that disadvantage women, girls, and their families. We are not service providers, nor do we raise money to support social services. Instead, this collaboration leverages issue-oriented research with the strength in numbers to which MAWC aspires.

Our courtwatch initiative, which places local volunteers in the domestic violence courtroom, collects data, documents patterns, and sends a message that women in Memphis expect accountability.

Working with the Shelby County Domestic Violence Council – which is itself a collaboration among service providers and activists – we have helped by recruiting courtwatch volunteers and analyzing the observational data that courtwatchers record.

Early feedback suggests that courtwatch reinforces the seriousness with which orders of protection are processed. More importantly, courtwatch and other research (including input and participation on the part of domestic violence survivors)
Conflict and Community Building

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a far larger group of some 800-1,000 anti-Klan protestors. Importantly, the Klan’s message of hate created alliances among diverse groups, some of which continue to work together.

Signs of Community-Building in Hamblen County

Less visible and often unreported in the press is the on-going, steady work of building bridges between longstanding residents and new Latino immigrants. The

Community Problem-Solving

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enable us to go beyond anecdotal arguments and frame issues with advocacy and mobilization in mind.

We expect to see some changes in the coming months and years in the way the courts operate. We expect to see a continuing reduction in the number of domestic violence homicides and to witness a parallel reduction in domestic violence assaults. Our emphasis on domestic violence is but part of a larger MAWC vision for women’s health. Our women’s health emphasis, in turn, is part of a multi-faceted agenda that prioritizes health, education, and economic self-sufficiency for women.
Redefining “Minority”  
continued from page 4

with minority firms, the Georgia legislature was asked to specify that “member of a minority” includes people who are Black, Hispanic, Asian-Pacific American, Native American, or Asian-Indian American.

At that time, state law defined “minority” as “a member of a race which comprises less than 50 percent of the total population of the state.” The problematic term of “race” was not defined in the existing law, nor was there recognition that people of color represent the numerical majority in some jurisdictions. The 2001 bill proposed to extend to companies receiving a state contract a tax break of up to $6,000 per year if they hired minority subcontractors for construction services, equipment and goods.

When the measure came up for a vote, some members of the legislative Black Caucus, whose numbers at the time totaled 47 in the Georgia House and Senate (out of 236, or 20 percent of the total), were among those who initially thwarted the bill. State Rep. Robert Holmes (D. – Atlanta) articulated the concerns of some African-American legislators. He argued that race, ethnicity, national origin, and immigration status are distinct concepts, which may be accompanied by different forms of discrimination. “Many Hispanics are not people of color. They are a language group, an ethnic group,” said Rep. Holmes. “These folks never experienced the same things we did.” Holmes continued, “Why would a person [benefit] based on the language that they speak?” Several white legislators joined the legislative Black Caucus in opposing the measure.

Not all African-American legislators opposed the move. Long-time civil rights activist State Rep. Tyrone Brooks (D. – Atlanta), for example, was outspoken in favor of the measure. “We’ve got to expand the tent,” said Rep. Brooks. Along with Rev. Jesse Jackson, who was in Atlanta for another purpose, Rep. Brooks and other legislators held a press conference to call for unity.

Press reports focused on African American legislators who opposed inclusion of “Hispanic” in the list of groups to be specified. However, opposition was not primarily from African Americans, nor was support based solely on an inclusive commitment to racial/ethnic justice. Some conservative whites, motivated by opposition to affirmative action in any form, opposed the bill.

For example, Rep. Earl Ehrhart (R. – Cobb Co.) offered an amendment to the measure to keep the old language. Ehrhart’s incentive was “completely different” from that of African American opponents, said Rep. Holmes. “He wanted no local affirmative action.”

Other Republican legislators, including some not noted for their progressive racial politics, supported the measure in order to court the burgeoning Latino vote. “The Republicans were very supportive, they were trying to woo the Hispanic vote,” said the bill’s House sponsor, Democratic Rep. Stephanie Stuckey Benefield. “Plus they liked seeing the Black Caucus fight with the other Democrats.”

In the end, the political desire to capture the growing Latino electorate trumped other considerations. When the initial House bill was blocked, Gov. Roy Barnes took the extraordinary step of lobbying personally to include Hispanics in the definition of minority.

Sensitive to a growing Latino electoral presence in the state, the governor was also aware that the National Hispanic Chamber of Commerce planned to hold its convention of some 10,000 attendees in Atlanta in the fall of 2001. Gov. Barnes urged the Senate committee considering the legislation to add language expanding the definition of minority to an unrelated bill. That bill passed and the whole process was concluded within a couple of weeks.

The state of Georgia now has a more inclusive definition of minority. Although the actual impact of the expanded definition in a narrow tax provision may be limited, the extension of “minority” status to Latinos in a Deep South state known for its black-white divide is of great import. As State Senator Sam Zamarippa, at the time chair of the Board of Directors of the Latin American Association in Atlanta, told the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, “Symbolically, it’s enormous.”

♦
Moreno (Mexico), Michael Dreiling (United States) and Marjorie Cohen (Canada) will provide summary analyses of NAFTA’s economic and political implications for each country. Subsequent presentations on March 25-26 will address the impacts of free trade on civic engagement, environmental quality, workers’ rights and other issues.

The NAFTA corridor, a super-highway that will eventually span from Toronto, Canada to Monterey, Mexico, with Memphis at its mid-point, is an additional topic of the symposium. With the exception of localized controversy over routing of the highway, notably in southern Indiana, there has been little public information, discussion or critical input regarding its rationale and implications.

In order to address this absence, CROW’s annual community issues forum will be held on Friday, March 25 as part of the symposium, and will focus on the planned routing and implications of the I-69 corridor in Memphis. As a clear, discrete instance of free trade policy, the corridor offers an unusual potential to engage global issues directly at the local level.

Symposium organizers also hope to begin linking scholars along the I-69 corridor into a NAFTA network, through which it will be possible to share research and information about the corridor’s development. Dr. Jane Henrici, assistant professor of anthropology and CROW affiliate, commented, “Scholars need to follow the linkages and impacts of free trade by creating our own transnational relationships.”

Additional symposium organizers include Drs. Steven J. Scanlan (sociology), Cynthia Pelak (sociology), Melissa Checker (anthropology), D’Ann Penner (history and co-director of the Hooks Institute) and Barbara Ellen Smith (CROW/sociology). Dr. Michael Schmidt, director of the Center for Multimedia Arts at the University of Memphis, is also working with the group, using new media technology and his relationships with similar media centers to help create the infrastructure for the NAFTA network.

All events in the symposium will be held at the Fogelman Executive Center on the campus of the University of Memphis. Registration for all three days is $75.00, which includes meals on Friday and Saturday.

If you would like to propose a presentation for the symposium, see the “Call for Proposals” on the CROW website, http://cas.memphis.edu/isc/crow. For additional information, contact the CROW office at 901-678-2770 or email crow@memphis.edu.
Selected Publications from Across Races and Nations

Available for download at the CROW website: http://cas.memphis.edu/isc/crow

“Case Studies of Collaboration”

“Conflict and Community-Building in the Appalachian South” by Susan Williams and Barbara Ellen Smith

“Civil Rights, Immigration, and the Prospects for Social Justice Collaboration in Georgia” by Ellen Spears

“Racial/Ethnic Rivalry and Solidarity in the Delta,” by Barbara Ellen Smith

“Conflict and Collaboration: Our Internal Challenges,” by Barbara Ellen Smith, Susan Williams and Wendy Johnson

“Organizational Resources for Latino Immigrants to the U.S. South,” by Gizelle Alverio and Barbara Ellen Smith

“Estudios de Casos de Colaboración”

“Los Conflictos y la Formación de una Comunidad en el Sur de los Apalaches” por Susan Williams y Barbara Ellen Smith

“Derechos Civiles, Inmigracion y Perspectivas de Colaboración para Lograr Justicia Social en Georgia” por Ellen Spears

“Rivalidad y Solidaridad Étnicas/Raciales en el área del Delta,” por Barbara Ellen Smith

“Conflict y Colaboración: Nuestros Desafíos Internos,” por Barbara Ellen Smith, Susan Williams y Wendy Johnson

“Directorio de Organizaciones para Inmigrantes Latinos en el Sur de los Estados Unidos,” por Gizelle Alverio y Barbara Ellen Smith

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Center for Research on Women
The University of Memphis
339 Clement Hall
Memphis, TN 38152
PH 901.678.2770
FX 901.678.3652
E-mail: crow@memphis.edu
http://cas.memphis.edu/isc/crow

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Center for Research on Women
Clement Hall 339
The University of Memphis
Memphis, TN 38152-3530
(901) 678-2770
http://cas.memphis.edu/isc/crow

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