

**:: Notes for Strategy (BUS 204) Seminar:: Session 2::
Stephen Shukaitis**

— Brief restatement / summary of first session (and of the assessment) for those who missed it

Theme for the week: Strategy & globalization

- Easy way to introduce: where do your clothes come from?
 - Historical context of these two essays: one written after the fall of the Berlin wall (the end of history and all that, supposed triumph of liberal capitalism) and the other more recently
 - Showing the connections between distant (both in historical and spatial terms) but related social phenomena; relations between enclosures
 - Connection between structural adjustment, rolling back social welfare, privatizing lands, wages cuts, etc... as all connected
 - What is globalization and where does it come from? What time scale are we talking about? It is not new that there are connections and flows between sections of the globe, rather the intensity of them, and their increased social importance.
 - Globalization narrative from whose perspectives?
 - Enclosures as starting point, underlying the formation of capitalism
 - But not a one time thing; constantly repeated and expanded
 - The new enclosures as responses to struggles of the 60s / 70s, have been in formation since then
 - 1. Breaking up and seizure of common lands, property, resources, etc...
 - 2. Land for debt
 - 3. Increasing reliance on mobile labor
 - 4. Collapse of socialism
 - 5. Attack on social reproduction
- Highlighting ambivalent character of globalization as strategy: some things gained, some things lost: globalization as “being-strategized” vs. the formation of strategy
- Moving industries around to reduce labor cost /the race to the bottom (flee from unionized labor, using threat of flight to discipline industry that remains)
 - Movement of what? Goods move across borders, more difficult depending (especially depending on the people in question)
 - Evolution of forms of contract and legal structures to deal with the problem of workers moving (slavery, coolies, indentured workers, precarious work)

Meenu Tewari, labor organizing in the current age: under conditions of intense globalization

- Increased importance of transnational supply networks
- Changing locus of organizing, away from the nation state / territory as prime focus
 - Organizing along commodity chains: novel ties between workers, NGOs, business associations (New Trade Union Initiative as an example)
 - Organizing not just in the factory, but between factory and community: developing leadership by women outside the factory, importance to unionization campaigns
 - Study into child labor, unexpected effects (pushing children into less regulated jobs, even more dangerous); thus, working with all of community
 - Working across countries so as to prevent “race to bottom”
 - Problem of “labor market rigidities”; alleged concern vs. realities

5 surprises:

1. Changing product mix: moving up the commodity chain
2. Tight labor markets w/ surplus labor, i.e. lack of skilled labor for certain jobs (turn toward design intensive products)
3. Cheap labor vs. cheap land: access to apparel parks, infrastructure maintained by someone other than the company
4. Improvements in domestic business labor practices, improving working conditions = more reliable employees
5. Scrambled assumptions about gender, pay, and areas