

Democratizing Globalization? Impacts and Limitations of Transnational Social Movements

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**GLOBALIZATION AND AUTONOMY
MONDIALISATION ET AUTONOMIE**



Preface

Professor Jackie Smith has been one of the leading social scientists in noting the importance of new social movements in organizing political opposition to patterns of globalization that enhance privilege for the wealthy while removing opportunities to alleviate poverty for those living in poverty, the majority of the world's population. In this working paper, she situates current forms of transnational activism historically, noting what current activists have in common with their predecessor movements. This analysis is helpful. Globalization is not new and certainly not confined to the past 15 years. Similarly, citizens, landed immigrants and refugees have had concerns about globalization over the past half century. Professor Smith also takes stock of the impact of the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001. She notes that this attack has provided a window of opportunity for the government of the United States to attack many individuals and communities promoting global justice. She concludes the paper with some suggestions for how progressive social movements in OECD countries in particular might counter US government repressive policies.

Abstract

This paper examines the organizational foundations for global democracy that have been developed through the efforts of generations of activists who have conceptualized their struggles in transnational or global terms. A broad look at the history of transnational activism shows that the “battle of Seattle” against the World Trade Organization had its origins well before the fall of 1999. It also shows that activists from poor countries have played strong roles in shaping the course of past global activism, and they are likely to play central roles in defining the future course of global struggles for democracy and social justice. Finally, we see that transnational activism has helped cultivate skills, collective identities, and perspectives on global interdependence that affect the possibilities for social movement activism today. At the same time, anti-democratic forces led mainly by the U.S. government have sought to preserve existing relations of domination and exploitation against the latest movement challenges. The current “war on terror” serves to mask a longer-term effort by proponents of economic globalization to restrict public opposition to their agenda. I outline some of the key reactions that the U.S. and other Western governments have taken in response to movement challenges, and I suggest several lessons this analysis uncovers for how activists—primarily those in the U.S. and other Western countries—can work to enhance the struggle for a more democratic global system.

Democratizing Globalization?

Impacts and Limitations of Transnational Social Movements

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Social change and democratization have always come from the interaction of political and economic power holders with those seeking to challenge those authorities by bringing new actors into the political arena and offering alternatives to the status quo (Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2000; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001; Risse, Ropp, and Sikink 1999; Tilly 1984). We are now clearly in the midst of a “wave” of protest (see Tarrow 1995) that challenges the character of global economic integration. While those protesting the predominant form of economic globalization express a huge diversity of aims—promoting everything from better labor and environmental protections to increased social spending for education and health care to resisting political repression and militarism, to name a few—the contest that characterizes today’s cycle of protest can be cast as one between two conflicting models of economic integration.

On the one hand, the predominant emphasis of corporate and political elites has been on economic globalization, or the integration of national economies into a single global economy. This model is based upon market ideologies, and it leaves decisions about how resources are allocated to global market forces. Critics of such “market fundamentalism” argue that markets are not effective ways of allocating resources when a society seeks to advance goals other than the maximization of profit. They argue for a system where markets are embedded within broader structures of governance, and thereby serving society’s needs rather than having society serve the needs of the market (see, e.g., Polanyi 1944). They seek institutions to foster cooperation and social solidarity in order to govern the competitive forces of the market. Such a system might be called “internationalization,” since it does not reject global efforts to coordinate policies and programs, but it also preserves the authority and decision-making structures within countries (Daly 2002).

Walden Bello, a prominent scholar-activist from the global south whose work has strongly influenced debates within this movement has introduced a notion of “deglobalization” to summarize key aspirations among many in what I refer to here as the “global justice movement.”¹ Bello’s key argument is that the globalized system of production and exchange has exacerbated poverty and inequality and has failed to serve the interests of a majority of the world’s population. The institutions driving economic globalization must therefore be rolled back, while alternative forms of global governance are developed to promote more sustainable and equitable economic and political relations (Bello 2002). Deglobalization goes furthest to preserve the autonomy of local communities and to emphasize the principle of subsidiarity—namely, that local settings should be the principal sites for production and decision making, and that these tasks should be moved to more remote levels only when they require broader coordination. The emphasis here is on enhancing local autonomy, or the ability of local communities to control resources and policy decisions that affect them.² Inherent in the deglobalization model is the notion that political democracy cannot exist without allowing people a stronger role in shaping their economic lives.

As Boswell and Chase-Dunn argue, we live in a “single world economy with an emerging global polity” (2000:16). Economic globalization propels a single global economy, while deglobalization and internationalization stress a need to both strengthen and broaden a global polity that can govern economic relations around principles that are defined outside the marketplace. Public debates about what form of globalization is preferable

are crucial for the survival of democracy. To date, relatively few people have had opportunities to consider these questions in a public way. Western efforts to promote democracy will fail unless they allow people greater democratic control over the economic decisions that have such a crucial impact on the quality of people's lives. A recent UN study showed that substantial numbers of people in Latin America would abandon their democracies if they could be guaranteed greater economic opportunities (Hoge 2004). The very idea that democracy is a valued form of government is being challenged by a system that emphasizes the form of democracy (elections) without insuring that people have a real stake in decisions that affect their lives.

Crisis of legitimacy

Modern governments derive their authority not from a 'divine right of kings,' but from the fact that they are elected by and accountable to the people they govern. The legitimacy of governments depends upon the broad perception that leaders are accountable and responsive to their constituents, and that leaders who violate public interest can be ejected from office.

Abundant evidence suggests that many governments around the world are finding their legitimacy in crisis. First, people are refusing to participate in the political system. We see consistent and substantial declines in voter participation across the West as membership in traditional political parties declines (Norris 1999; Verba et. al. 1995). At the other extreme are groups like al Qaeda, whose claims that the global system is corrupt and fundamentally incapable of addressing people's needs and interests find a more receptive hearing among those who feel increasingly marginalized by the existing system. Such groups reject fundamental democratic premises of nonviolent conflict resolution and tolerance of diverse positions. When people are asked to participate in a system that is responsive to their inputs, they feel they have a stake in the survival of the system, and they are more willing to accept democratic norms. But as economic globalization exacerbates economic inequalities and denies more and more people an effective voice in the decisions that affect them, more people will support groups advocating non-traditional forms of political action—including violence—as a tool for change. Both trends signal a serious crisis for democracy.

The crisis of democratic legitimacy is not one that only affects states, but it also affects international institutions. In his address at the opening of the 2003 United Nations General Assembly, Kofi Annan urged governments to make progress in efforts to restructure the UN Security Council. His argument highlighted the vast discrepancy between the impact of Security Council decisions on member states and the scope of input members have on those decisions. Between 1945 and 2003, the United Nations grew by 140 members, while the Security Council gained just 4 additional members. The structure of the Security Council gives the five victors of World War II permanent, veto-wielding status, allowing them effectively to control all major decisions about how the world will be governed. Annan warned that the 186 member nations who are excluded from this selective club of the "Permanent 5" will be unlikely to continue supporting the global institution if it does not better reflect their interests (Roy 2003). Because the UN depends upon the voluntary cooperation of its members, it cannot survive without a belief that all of its members have a voice. At the same time, the global trade regime remains threatened by a standoff between governments of the global South,² who want a fair system of multilateral trading rules, and the leading rich countries—especially the U.S. and Europe—who are refusing to abandon practices that foster their own economic interests at the expense of "free" trade.

The crisis of legitimacy creates openings or vulnerabilities that encourage the kind of surges in popular mobilization (both nonviolent and violent) we have seen in recent years (see, e.g., Tarrow 1996; Tarrow 1998). Groups that have been excluded from decision-making are demanding representation in a system that is defined by a growing "democratic deficit" (Markoff 2004).³ Many see transnational social movements as helping to define a global polity that is more democratic and inclusive than that preferred by either the economic

globalizers or those who mobilize fundamentalist resistance to it (see, e.g., Barber 1995; Florini 2003). My research has sought to expand our understanding of the organizations that make up what we might call a “transnational social movement sector” so that we can better assess its capabilities and limitations. By definition, social movements lack the resources and political access available to their opponents, and they have less freedom to choose how they will organize. Based largely on volunteer labor and financial contributions, movements depend on both mobilizing the most marginalized groups while attracting allies who can expand the movement’s resource base and political access. At the same time, they must struggle against the tendency to reproduce in their organizations the inequalities they struggle against. This is no easy task, since those most able to give money, time, and energy to efforts to promote social change are generally not those most disadvantaged (McCarthy 1987 [1977]).

Democracy and institutional change results from the interplay between authorities and a variety of challengers who promote alternatives to the status quo. Democratization is seen as a process, not a static condition, and it develops in waves that alternate between democratic and antidemocratic tendencies (Markoff 1996; Tilly 1978). This paper explores the democratizing foundations created by many generations of activists who have conceptualized their struggles as transcending particular nations. It also explores the more recent wave of “anti-democratic” forces that have sought to prevent the entrance of new voices into global political arenas. Finally, I draw from this broad historical overview to suggest some lessons for pro-democracy advocacy in a global era.

Foundations of Contemporary Transnational Activism

Like other aspects of “globalization,” political activism has a long history of transcending national borders (see, e.g. Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2000; Chatfield 1997; Hanagan 2002; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Nintz 2002). Throughout modern times, the world has seen a variety of attempts by people working across national borders to affect change at the national and inter-state level. They have shared ideas and analyses, cultivated solidarity networks to support their respective struggles, and increasingly they have built more formal and sustained structures for transnational exchange and cooperation. They have promoted goals such as the abolition of slavery, the expansion of worker rights and other international human rights, the elimination of war and colonialism, and the promotion of socialism and democracy.

In a variety of ways, transnational activists have sought to re-orient the distribution of economic and political power in the global system. While the issues on which they focus have varied, there is a common theme in that they all have somehow sought to limit states’ capacity for waging war, to promote human rights as a protection against the arbitrary use of state power, or to expand access to political and economic resources by marginalized groups. Occasionally they have adopted explicitly multilateralist aims, seeking to build formal inter-state institutions that could check the activities of individual governments. Over time, the major emphases of transnational activism shifted, building upon the lessons of prior activism. Table One summarizes four major streams of activism with transnational elements during the 20th and early 21st centuries.⁴

Table 1: Historical Shifts in Transnational Social Change Activism

Period	Key Themes	Central Emphases/ Developments
Pre-1945-1950s	Socialism & Liberal Internationalism	*Anti-capitalist/ Socialist *Pacifist *World Federalist/ Multilateralist
1960s-1970s	Altruism & Interdependence	*National Independence Movements *Third World Solidarity *Rise of Amnesty Int'l, Greenpeace
1980s-1990s	Exploring Interdependence & Seeking Solutions	*Peace Movements *IMF/World Bank Protests *UN Global Conference Organizing *Emphasis on Alliances/ Networking
2000s	Global Justice	*Greater militancy (esp. in North) *More explicit opposition to capitalism/ corporate globalization *Reduced focus on/ confidence in United Nations *World Social Forums & pro-active organizing

Socialism & Liberal Internationalism

The earliest forms of transnational activism centered on building an international socialist movement, opposing slavery and war, and promoting international law and institutions.⁵ In this era, transnational ties were being mobilized to help define relationships between states, capitalists, and citizens, and by going outside the state, activists could find ideas, legitimacy, and leverage to advance their causes. They also aimed to define an interstate system under rules that would help protect people from war and its consequences. This era saw the achievement of major advances for workers. Movements such as women's suffrage grew out of international labor, antislavery, and pacifist efforts, and the global justice movement built upon principles of those earlier campaigns to extend notions of citizenship (Ferree and Mueller 2004; Rosenthal et al. 1985). Some of the organizations of this period—such as the International Anti-Slavery Society, War Resisters League, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom—remain active today.

Altruism to Interdependence

A second era of transnational activism we might distinguish is the rise of national independence movements and corresponding third world solidarity movements. Transnational ties helped mobilize opposition to colonial practices (e.g., Hochschild 1998), convey messages about revolutionary and anti-colonial struggles, and cultivate transnational networks for financial and other support (Rucht 2000). The era was marked by transnational efforts to keep opposition to apartheid on the international agenda, even as Cold War rivalries and the Vietnam War dampened much hope for multilateral cooperation in the United Nations. The spread of information about conflicts and suffering in different parts of the world, and the connections these had to colonialism or superpower intervention helped foster greater understandings of global interdependence. The experiences of activists working to change the policies of governments, promote national liberation, or to mitigate the suffering of

people in the global South helped lay the intellectual groundwork for future activism. The contacts between Northern and Southern activists helped transform (though they could not eliminate) paternalistic visions of some Northern activists into more complex understandings of how the policies of Western states were implicated in wars and human rights violations around the world (Livezey 1989). Amnesty International was formed in this era, followed a decade later by Greenpeace, marking the beginning of a new phase of rapidly expanding transnational mobilization.

Exploring Interdependence and Seeking Solutions

The 1980s and 1990s saw a quickening pace of transnational communications, as peace movements expanded transnational ties and as opposition to global economic policies mounted around the world, especially in the global South. While there was not necessarily much transnational collective action, the mobilization of similar movements around common issues generated transnational contacts and analyses that further enhanced understandings of global interdependence and helped sharpen analyses of problems and their solutions. Struggles in national contexts were more likely to be framed in transnational terms, and they more frequently focused on international targets. Popular protests in the global South against the policies of the IMF (Walton and Seddon 1994) coincided with environmental and human rights mobilizations against the World Bank in Europe and North America (Gerhards and Rucht 1992; Rucht 2003). At the same time, more people were focusing on the United Nations as a potential target for social change activism. The United Nations hosted a series of global conferences aimed at addressing major global problems. The conferences proved fruitful settings for transnational exchanges of all kinds, aiding in the development of new understandings of global problems and encouraging transnational networking among those seeking to address them (Friedman, Clark, and Hochstetler forthcoming; Willetts 1996a; 1989). They also encouraged citizens' groups to promote multilateral institutions as tools for addressing a variety of problems such as poverty, environmental degradation, and human rights violations. This paralleled early efforts of peace activists to promote international law and organization as a means of curbing state violence.

Addressing themes such as environment and development (1992), human rights (1993), population (1994), social development (1995), women's issues (1995), and housing (1997), UN conferences created spaces for individual activists and public officials to discuss shared problems and possible solutions. The rather short time frames between conferences, coupled with the preparatory and follow-up meetings associated with each conference, allowed sustained discussions of the issues and provided spaces for activists to learn from each other and adapt their views as they gained new information. Moreover, the conferences institutionalized routine review meetings that encouraged activists to monitor government compliance with their promises—thereby both providing a focal point for geographically dispersed activists and stimulating more systematic efforts to enhance governments' willingness and capacity to uphold international agreements.

Governments encouraged citizens' participation at the United Nations in part because they recognized that the organization would not succeed without the popular support and legitimacy that social groups bring to it. Broad popular support was lacking in the case of the League of Nations, leading to the failure of the United States Administration to win Congressional ratification of its decision to join the organization it helped to establish. Thus, when President Roosevelt initiated international dialogue on a United Nations Organization, he sought to incorporate citizens' associations into the process. Analysts have identified direct links between the activities of these civil society organizations and wording in the United Nations Charter that recognizes human rights and grants formal Consultative Status for nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) at the UN (Charnovitz 1997; Kriesberg 1997; Willetts 1996b). A similar logic drove UN officials such as Maurice

Strong, the Secretary General of the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development, to press for broad recognition of citizens' associations at global conferences sponsored by the UN. From the perspective of international officials, the most powerful governments are unlikely to take dramatic actions to promote environmental or social goals without public pressure and support. Encouraging ties between civil society and United Nations conferences was therefore a way to cultivate the political will to support multilateralism in the United Nations.

UN conferences were important "training grounds" for activists, many of whom lacked basic knowledge about the politics of inter-state institutions and had few skills in working in transnational alliances. A 1995 survey revealed that many groups attended conferences mainly to strengthen their organizations and to network with other NGOs.⁶ This was especially true for Southern respondents, who were generally less optimistic about influencing their governments or the outcomes of inter-governmental proceedings (Benchmark Environmental Consulting 1996). Most respondents reported that their greatest successes at the conferences were in strengthening processes of transnational cooperation and coordination among NGOs. Ninety-four percent reported that their strongest impact at global conferences was in establishing new links with other NGOs (Benchmark Environmental Consulting 1996; Krut 1997). The Benchmark survey also found that the complexities of conference procedures tended to hinder the efforts of some activists, especially women and Southern activists. But it also showed that activists who had attended more than one conference were better able to follow and try to influence conference proceedings. These results support the argument that the past few decades of transnational activism within the UN system have generated new skills, processes, and organizational structures to facilitate mobilization around global issues (see, e.g., Foster 1999; Friedman, forthcoming; Snyder 2003). Moreover, the transnational dialogues generated around global conferences contributed to analyses of global problems and potential solutions that inform contemporary transnational activism.

Certainly as a result of the UN Conferences, the 1980s and 1990s saw important gains in formal transnational social movement organizing.⁷ Besides developing skills and capacities for participating in global conferences and for monitoring international agreements, transnational networks grew broader and deeper. The numbers of formal transnational social movement organizations (TSMOs) grew by nearly 200 percent. While activists from the global South remained under-represented, more TSMOs were based in the South, and more had members in the South than was true at the beginning of this period (Smith 2004). Also, groups reported substantially more ties to international agencies and to other non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In the early 1980s, just one third of all groups reported any ties to an international agency, and of those the average number of ties to inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) was just 2.6. By 2000, more than two thirds reported some link to at least one international agency, and the average number of ties groups reported grew by 75%. The change in the networks among NGOs was even more dramatic. Again just one third of groups reported any ties to an NGO in the early 1980s, and those groups reported an average of 2 NGO ties. By 2000, nearly 90% of all groups reported at least one NGO tie, and the average was 7.4 ties.⁸

The networking and dialogue fostered through participation in UN processes altered the ways transnational organizers framed their struggles. More groups adopted more complex approaches to problems than they had in the past. During conferences, substantial energy went into efforts to promote common interpretations of priorities and strategies, since civil society groups had a limited amount of time to make their presentations to formal gatherings of government delegations. Activists with widely varying backgrounds had to work together to maximize their joint impact, and this created incentives for activists to be open to radically re-thinking their ideas about the causes and solutions to the problems on which they were working. Moreover, they often found that working on a single issue such as the environment became complicated when efforts to protect the

environment threatened the human rights of populations in endangered areas (Brysk 1996; Rothman and Oliver 2002). The more activists needed to work with other groups in order to have a political voice, the more likely they were to alter their framing of problems to accommodate the interests of other allies (cf. Staggenborg 1986). Accordingly, the number of TSMOs with a multi-issue agenda rose from 43 at the beginning of the 1980s to more than 160 in 2000.⁹ At the same time, there was a dramatic shift in attention to economic justice issues as more groups were organizing around a broad global justice/ peace/ environment frame. Global justice themes oriented just 4% in the early 1990s, but this figure rose to 11% by the end of the decade. This shift in emphasis, coupled with the parallel increase in networking among civil society groups, reflects higher levels of cooperation and efforts at coalition among these groups.

Global Justice

The most recent period of transnational activism, the global justice era, is characterized by heightened confrontation between civil society actors in the North and international institutions.¹⁰ This greater militancy developed during the 1990s at the meetings of the Bretton Woods Institutions (World Bank, IMF, and World Trade Organization) and Group of 8 (G-8), and it gained widespread attention in the United States after the police riots at the World Trade Organization protests in Seattle in 1999.

The aims of protesters also have become more explicitly anti-capitalist than they had been in the past, and more diverse groups were focusing on transnational corporations as a major source of their grievances. This can most certainly be linked to the years of sustained transnational dialogue enabled by the UN Conference process. Friedman and her colleagues noted important attempts during the 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen to highlight the ways in which the global financial institutions were undermining commitments to human rights and development that governments made in the United Nations (Friedman et al., Forthcoming). Krut (1997) also reports increased discussion about and tensions over the incompatibilities between the UN treaty system and the global financial institutions.

This era also reflects a much greater diversity in the structures and tactics used by activists in transnational campaigns. Advancements in technology have allowed more decentralized organizing structures, and it is now more possible than ever for local individuals and groups to have direct contact with activist counterparts around the world. Organizers have used the Internet effectively to communicate details of protests instantaneously to supporters around the world. This has helped amplify the voices of those seeking to promote policy change and it has dramatized the similarities in experiences—in terms of both grievances and government reactions to protest—for diverse activist groups. Whereas prior to Seattle most transnational activism was limited to lobbying and symbolic protests at formal international meetings, mass public demonstrations are more frequently used to target global institutions.

The other shift between this period and the previous one is that activists seem to be devoting less energy and attention to the United Nations. In part this change is related to the absence of large-scale UN conferences and the mobilization that surrounded them. However, another reason for the shift is the sense that the global financial institutions have in many ways eclipsed the UN and undermined its importance. Many found that the treaties on which they focused their energies during the 1980s and 1990s were being trumped by international trade agreements that allow trade law to supercede other international agreements.¹¹ Many in the activist community had also grown wary of a growing corporate influence in the UN, which began during the mid-1990s. The International Forum on Globalization articulated this fear most directly when it hosted a meeting to parallel the UN Millennium Forum entitled, “Can the UN be Salvaged?” David Korten, a leading activist and intellectual, expressed his own disappointment at this realization:

Those of us who have been studying these issues have long known of the strong alignment of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the World Bank, and the IMF to the corporate agenda. By contrast the United Nations has seemed a more open, democratic and people friendly institution. What I found so shattering was the strong evidence that the differences I have been attributing to the United Nations are largely cosmetic (Korten 1997).

Korten further elaborated the significance of this development in a 1997 memo to Razali Ismail, then UN General Assembly President:

The credibility of the UN is seriously at stake here. Consider the implications for the UN's public image as people wake up to the reality that the scarce UN development funds intended to benefit the poor of the world are in fact being dispensed as corporate welfare to help finance the global corporate take over of the world economy. *It should not be surprising if this eventually pushes the progressive citizen organizations that have heretofore supported the United Nations into a position of organizing against UN funding, as many of them have organized against World Bank and IMF funding.* (Korten 1997, author's emphasis)

While few progressive groups have actively mobilized against the UN, there has been a noticeable decline in attention to the institution within civil society forums such as the World Social Forum. Nevertheless, there seems to be general acknowledgment that the UN is an important part of any solution to major global problems, despite its flaws. Many organizers are responding to the representative failures of global institutions by exploring more popularly-based approaches to advancing a different global political and economic order.

A final important characteristic of this latest phase of transnational activism is that instead of mobilizing according to the conference schedules of global institutions, activists have advocated a pro-active approach that is more decentralized and grassroots oriented than were previous eras. Following criticisms that the global justice protests were only "against" something but lacked a coherent vision of an alternative to economic globalization, activists in Brazil and France came together to launch the "World Social Forum" (WSF) process in 2001. Under the slogan "another world is possible," around 10,000 participants attended the first WSF in Porto Alegre Brazil, and the numbers swelled to more than 100,000 in the past two years. The Forum is an "open space" for activists to gather, exchange experiences, support each other's struggles, build transnational alliances, and plan coordinated strategies and actions. It also reflects efforts to define new relationships between movements, parties, and other civic actors (Baiocchi 2004). In many ways, its form reflects the NGO conferences that ran parallel to UN global conferences, but the WSF represents an autonomous civil society approach to defining a global agenda. This parallels a finding in the above-mentioned survey of participants in UN Conferences, which concluded, "NGOs are more interested in creating direct citizen to citizen links at and around international events than in attempting to alter what apparently is perceived to be the relatively weak or weakening existing intergovernmental machinery" (Benchmark Environmental Consulting 1997:54). The survey found that many participants were beginning to recognize a role for themselves in shaping the global system, since

the nation state has failed to adequately 'represent' its citizens on a range of global issues. The nation state has been eclipsed by the development of a global consciousness, a consciousness of nature, a women's consciousness, along with the collapse of the ideological cohesiveness fostered by the Cold War. . . . In this situation, the international NGO community sees itself—and is increasingly seen by governments—as part of embryonic institutional structures that will define a different form of global governance, a model in which citizen action occurs at a global level (Benchmark Environmental Consulting 1997:4).

The World Social Forum process, while still quite young, holds tremendous promise for expanding transnational activism and for deepening connections between global and local political processes. The Forum inspired the proliferation of regionally and locally-oriented “World Social Forums” that enable activists working at the local level to interact with activists from within their region as well as with organizers working at national and global levels. This process can significantly enhance what Sidney Tarrow has called the “domestication” of transnational protest, or the articulation of global conflicts within nationally defined political contexts (Tarrow Forthcoming). For instance, the meeting of the Boston Social Forum on the eve of the 2004 Democratic National Convention brought together local groups working on housing and health issues with delegations from the Brazilian Landless Workers Movement (MST) and other activists working at national and global levels. The plenary sessions of this meeting framed struggles in global terms and explicitly linked the work being done there to the broader World Social Forum process. Activists—mostly from around the Massachusetts area—were reminded of the global repercussions of the U.S. elections, and were exposed to some international perspectives on a variety of U.S. and global policies.

This historical overview demonstrates several key points. First, the movement for global justice did not start in Seattle. In fact, its organizational and intellectual origins can be traced back much further than most people might think. Another important conclusion here is that global South activists have been more central to setting the stage for contemporary global justice activism than is often recognized. The “battle of Seattle” really began with the IMF riots in the global South. Southern struggles against colonialism, apartheid, and the “neocolonialism” of the global financial system both fostered transnational linkages and helped sensitize Northern activists to issues of interdependence and the broader structural sources of economic inequality. And in the current era, it is the Southern unions, political parties, and movements that are playing central roles as drivers of innovation (Baiocchi 2004; Chase-Dunn 2002; Kitchelt 2003; Moody 1997). A third conclusion is that the experience of struggle has informed and nurtured new skills and structures for transnational organizing, and these lessons have developed over time (cf. Polletta 2001).

Although their scope and scale have increased in more recent times, transnational ties have always helped activists generate better understandings of how to build alliances that cross national boundaries and how to best organize those ties. Transnational ties have also challenged people to think globally in ways that national action alone cannot. They have helped cultivate “imagined communities” beyond nation states and have fostered collective identities that emphasize transcendent values and goals. They have helped cultivate organizing techniques and leaders who can help bridge the differences between different cultural and sectoral groups. Thus, social movements with transnational ties have been crucial to advancing innovations in multilateral governance. By expanding the range of participants involved in discussions about global policy as well as the knowledge and skills that people have, they are vital to efforts to democratize the global polity.

Government Responses to Transnational Challenges

With the widely acknowledged success of transnational activism at gaining access to international institutions and at cultivating broad alliances for change came new efforts by economic and political authorities to limit their impacts. Tarrow (forthcoming) documents increasing violence in the policing of international protest in established Western democracies. Governments including, importantly, the United States, have sought to curb citizen access to international forums (Charnovitz 1997), while corporate actors have mobilized “counter-movements” (Maney 2001) by creating their own “NGOs” to lobby at international meetings and to otherwise influence government and public perceptions of the conflicts (Bruno 2002; Sklair 1997). At the same time as the world’s governments were cooperating to restrict public protest at the meetings of global financial elites,

they were also closing doors for groups seeking to lobby at UN meetings—even those groups whose aims mirror those in the UN Charter. For instance, in July 2001 (prior to September 11 and the launch of the U.S.-led “war on terror”), John R. Bolton, Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security, addressed the Plenary Session of the UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons for the U.S. saying:

We do not support the promotion of international advocacy activity by international or non-governmental organizations, particularly when those political or policy views advocated are not consistent with the views of all member states. What individual governments do in this regard is for them to decide, but we do not regard the international governmental support of particular political viewpoints to be consistent with democratic principles. Accordingly, the provisions of the draft Program that contemplate such activity should be modified or eliminated (Bolton 2001).¹²

The history of decisions to include civil society groups at international meetings shows an explicit effort to involve the public in order to cultivate popular support for (or at least acceptance of) multilateral institutions. If the UN and other global institutions roll back earlier provisions for NGO access and participation, they risk undermining the democratic claims of legitimacy upon which most of their major member governments depend. They also threaten public support for multilateral institutions and governance at a time when such institutions are urgently needed.

Another way governments have sought to limit civil society access is by attempting to shift major policy decisions outside the UN and into the more exclusive global financial arena (Bello 1999). The neoliberal agenda of the United States always left little room for a strong United Nations. The U.S. worked to reduce UN influence principally under the guise of an effort to increase the UN’s efficiency and to reduce costs. But an analysis of the changes that were made at the behest of the United States suggests other motives. For instance, in 1992 the UN Center on Transnational Corporations, which was set up to help developing countries monitor and negotiate with transnational corporations and to develop a code of corporate conduct, was transformed into a smaller agency that matches corporate interests with countries for foreign investment (Bennis 1997; Bruno and Karliner 2002; Karliner 1997). The post of Director-General for International Economic Cooperation and Development was abolished, and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was severely constrained by the (Northern-dominated) decision at UNCTAD VIII (1992) to refuse it jurisdiction over matters being negotiated under the GATT (now the WTO) (Bello 2000).

Global financial negotiations effectively take place outside the United Nations framework, and no serious efforts were made to reconcile these negotiations with existing international law or practice (O’ Brien, Goetz, Scholte, and Williams 2000; Skogly 1993). Indeed, the major goal of trade negotiations is to eliminate laws that might restrict the flow of goods and services across borders, and this aim is better served when the numbers of players active in decision-making is limited. The well-established precedent of involving NGOs (other than business interest groups, who are often represented on government delegations) as observers at international meetings has been ignored or severely restricted in trade and financial forums, especially the IMF (Charnovitz 1997; Nelson 1995). Charnovitz’s comprehensive review of NGO relations with intergovernmental organizations reveals a consistent tendency for NGOs to be involved in multilateral relief work and in efforts to promote popular legitimation of international agencies, while they were entirely absent (with one exception)¹³ from early multilateral meetings on financial matters. The WTO now allows limited access for NGOs, but a substantial portion of those granted formal recognition are business interest organizations, and the accreditation process remains much more restricted than in the UN.¹⁴

As it was shifting to alter the balance of global power in favor of global finance, the U.S. also used its power as the largest contributor to the UN budget to press UN officials to accommodate its interests. In response to this pressure Kofi Annan launched a “Global Compact” designed to cultivate “partnerships” with the private sector. Many critics argue that the Global Compact undermines the independence and integrity of the UN system, and they note that some of the first companies to join the Global Compact — including Nike, BP Amoco, and Rio Tinto — are among those most implicated in violations of international norms. Activists have mounted a campaign denouncing the Global Compact as a form of “Blue Washing” (a parallel concept to “green washing”) that allows companies to enhance their tarnished images by associating themselves with the United Nations (Bruno and Karliner 2002). But while Global Compact partners sign on to a statement of principles, they have not allowed the UN to formally monitor their compliance with these. Critics point out the Global Compact’s failure to acknowledge some of the fundamental tensions between the profit motivations of corporations and the aims of the UN Charter. A further complaint of activists is that the Global Compact amplifies the influence of transnational corporations in the one forum where their influence had previously been restricted. And it does not seek to create countermeasures to insure that disadvantaged people and countries maintain a voice in the organization.

The U.S. reaction to the terrorist attacks of September 11 quickened the pace of what was already a systematic effort to curb citizen involvement in global affairs. In fact, counter-terrorism laws were already being used in Washington D.C. during the World Bank/IMF meeting in the spring of 2000, in Quebec City at the Summit of the Americas in 2001, and at other sites of global economic protests to harass and otherwise obstruct the expression of nonviolent public opposition to economic globalization.¹⁵ Thus, we should see these recent repressive actions as part of a long-standing effort to maintain the privileges and power of the existing global political and economic elite rather than as a specific response to the threats raised by the 2001 attacks.

Strategies for Democratizing the Global Polity

Social movements have always been forces for the democratization of political institutions, and transnational movements are helping to democratize the global polity by fostering participation, shaping agendas, and demanding greater transparency and accountability from their political leaders. They face important barriers from governments with unprecedented military and surveillance capacities, a concentrated and commercialized global media, a transnational capitalist class with unprecedented access to wealth and coercive capabilities, and an ideological struggle framed in terms of a “war on terrorism.”¹⁶ Yet the democratic deficit in global institutions, exacerbated by a parallel hollowing-out of traditional state authority, challenges the very foundations of contemporary political institutions. This crisis also creates opportunities for those seeking to promote nonviolent forms of political change.

While many groups speak explicitly of their pro-democracy aims, for many others, advocating for more democratic institutions is seen as secondary to their work on particular issues. More coordinated and self-conscious efforts to promote global democracy would enhance the effectiveness of a wide variety of social change campaigns. Below are some conclusions that we might take from the growing body of scholarship on globalization, democracy, and social movements that speak to the matter of how activists—particularly those in the U.S. and other countries of the global north—can seek to democratize the global polity.

Advocate for Democracy Among States

Reducing global inequality and insuring the survival of the multilateral system will depend upon maintaining a sense that all states have a stake in the global institutional order. The current UN system faces a crisis of legitimacy because of the lack of democracy among states. Activists in the global South are most disadvantaged, because their governments are both the most repressive and the least able to influence global political outcomes. Social movements can help support claims of poor country governments by pressing their governments to accept major reforms of the UN system – especially the expansion and restructuring of the Security Council—to make it more responsive to and representative of the needs and interests of all member states.

A campaign to enhance inter-state democracy can help advance social movement efforts to strengthen people's movements by cultivating movement allies among the world's governments. The history of NGO relations in the UN shows many ways that civil society groups can both gain access to states and international civil servants as well as leverage against those states that resist the changes they seek (Smith et al. 1997). By cultivating government allies in this way, movements can better resist attempts by some governments to roll back the access of civil society groups to UN bodies.

Unite to Challenge United States Unilateralism

The United States—sometimes called the “Group of 1” or “G-1” in UN parlance—has an enormous impact on the quality of life around the world. Many political leaders in the U.S. are either indifferent to or refuse to recognize the global impact of U.S. actions and the hypocrisy of U.S. foreign policy, and this motivates fundamentalist opposition groups and contributes to rising anti-Americanism around the world (Chua 2004). Social movements working across national borders can help to counter the unilateralist biases in U.S. policies and in public debates. First, activists in the United States must confront their global outlaw government and mobilize domestic public opinion around notions of global fairness and equity. John Clark, the director of a recently concluded Eminent Panel on UN-Civil Society Relations argues:

Increasing resentment about US selfishness and double standards is fueling anti-Americanism around the world. US civil society has a pivotal role to play in ensuring that this mood translates to positive change rather than deepening anger. US [civil society organizations] have a duty to make sure Southern citizens' concerns are heard....They can use their very considerable access to media and politicians, their communications skills, and their vast resources to promote global responsibility, not unilateralism. (Clark 2003: 196)

The above discussion showed that transnational organizations have developed the ties and analyses to help expand public awareness about the impacts of actions of the US on the lives of others. More concerted efforts to communicate this to a broader public might prove most fruitful in enhancing national and global security. For instance, programs that sensitize U.S. citizens to the views of those outside this country, such as speaker tours and public forums about the role of the U.S. in the world, can help cultivate understandings and trust that would undermine efforts of “terrorists” or presidents to use fear as a tool to shape public behavior.

But U.S. activists must also recognize that they need allies if they are to counter the U.S. military-industrial complex and corporate-government collusion. They need the support of governments and civil societies outside the U.S. to rein in this global hegemon. Some activists have recognized this in the run-up to the 2004 presidential election, as they have urged people from around the world to weigh in on public debates about the significance of the U.S. elections for the rest of the world (see, e.g. www.earthtoamerica.org). Key opportunities—such as those offered by regional and world social forums—have been missed for cultivating broad transnational alliances to specifically work towards bringing the U.S. into the multilateral fold.¹⁷

Capitalize on Public Support for Multilateralism & Democracy

Will the world's civil societies unite to encourage a more multilateralist U.S. foreign policy, they should find a number of factors working in their favor. Public opinion research consistently shows very strong support for multilateralism within the U.S. and other publics. Even at the height of the buildup to the war in Iraq, more than 80% of U.S. citizens surveyed agreed that the United States should have sought UN backing before going to war. And more than three-quarters argued that the U.S. "should do its share in efforts to solve international problems together with other countries" (Program on International Policy Attitudes 2002). But the U.S. remains conspicuously out of step with both the views of its own people and the views of the rest of the world. Many social movements have opted to focus on their primary aims of peace, human rights, environment, etc. rather than adopt the seemingly indirect route of promoting broader public support for multilateralism. And many activists remain trapped within the old, nationally-oriented frameworks that inhibit strategic thinking at a global level. But a more informed public would be less easily swayed by politicians' and right-wing talk show hosts' squeamishness about multilateral "threats" to national sovereignty and interests. It would make it harder for politicians to continue to misrepresent public preferences in their votes on foreign policy.

Another problem with some of the global justice mobilizing efforts in the North is that they have targeted multilateral financial institutions without considering some of the repercussions of this framing of the problem. Many global South activists are concerned that opposition to the World Bank and IMF will further restrict the already limited public financial flows going into their countries. And although they may not agree with their governments' environmental or social policies, they prefer not to relinquish their national autonomy by requiring environmental and social "conditionalities" as prerequisites for obtaining international aid. At a time when bilateral aid is in decline, the multilateral financial institutions provide the bulk of foreign aid. Clark argues that protest in the global north should target the policies of northern governments – policies that reflect stingy aid policies and greedy trade policies — rather than the institutions whose policies are largely determined by those governments (Clark 2003).

Likewise, the general public supports the values of democracy. But the values of participation, equality, tolerance, rule of law, and dialogue are not concepts that are regularly or deeply considered when American political leaders evoke the term democracy. Efforts to sensitize the public to the kinds of practices that form the core of a democratic society can enhance democratic expression (and openness to hearing voices of dissent) at home and make it difficult for the U.S. government (and others) to claim to be "promoting democracy" when it most clearly is not. Moreover, a greater appreciation for what makes government democratic can help undermine public tolerance for undemocratic unilateralist policies of the U.S. (or any other) government in the international system.

Promote a Movement for Democracy

I began with a discussion of the contemporary challenges to democratic governance. These challenges are ones that only social movements can help resolve. The continued legitimacy of our national and international institutions depends upon expanding access and amplifying the voices of the growing ranks of the disadvantaged. Enormous concentrations of wealth have undermined democratic practices everywhere, and serious efforts to restructure the social balance of power in favor of more people must be undertaken.

The substantial study by Verba and his colleagues of the ways the U.S. political system distorts public expression provides important insights into how to enhance democracy (Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995). They conclude that people don't participate in politics because they lack the time and resources; rather they lack the relevant knowledge or interest, and/or they were never taught or asked to participate. Inequality in

U.S. and global society contributes to all of these deprivations, producing a systematic bias in favor of conservative policies and a systematic exclusion of disadvantaged groups. Conscious efforts to remedy inequalities in the resources, knowledge, and opportunities for political participation can dramatically enhance both American and global democracy.

Access to resources While access to financial resources is not something most movements can affect very much, there are other politically relevant resources whose availability movements can affect. Skills that are relevant to political work—including tasks such as attending and running a meeting, public speaking, writing a memo or newsletter—can be cultivated in social movements. How conscious are groups of attempting to expand opportunities for developing and improving these kinds of skills? In small voluntary groups, these tasks are often given to those most willing or best able to do them. A conscious effort to socialize a wider core of members in doing politically relevant tasks can make a broader contribution to the democratic life of our communities (Baiocchi 2004; Polletta and Jasper 2001). Groups can also organize training workshops to help people gain important skills, and they can raise money to support scholarships, student internships, or fellowships that give young people opportunities to both learn skills and make a living by working for social change.

Time is another resource that movements can seek to impact. Many people feel they have little free time to devote to studying issues or attending meetings. Organizers can ease time pressures in two ways: first, by providing babysitting or serving meals at meetings to free people from family obligations that would otherwise prevent them from attending movement or public education events. Second, they can try to reach people in the course of their everyday routines—at schools, softball leagues, churches, etc. This might require building alliances with other community groups, or it might call for some new approaches to doing political activism that stimulates civic discourse in a variety of settings. If people don't have time for specifically political activities, more must be done to use the spaces of everyday life to expand dialogues about public issues.

Knowledge/ Interest Most movement organizations devote substantial energies to public education. And it is clear that—particularly in global matters—public education is crucial to expanding the potential pool of people who will be active with regard to these issues. A study of a random sample of Americans¹⁸ produced a consistent finding that when people were provided with information and opportunities to discuss issues they adopted more progressive political positions. This was especially true in foreign policy matters, where respondents showed consistently more support for multilateral policies and substantially higher support for increased foreign aid after they had participated in nonpartisan forums. More systematic efforts to help the general public better understand the world, and to encourage them to take a more active interest in it, would make our foreign policy more participatory and consistent with public values. This means campaigning to expand the space on public and media agendas for dialogues about global issues. Such efforts should not only involve sponsoring public forums. They also should promote systematic changes that can enhance civic life, such as making election day a national holiday or encouraging employers to provide time and space for their workers to attend meetings relevant to public affairs.

Invitation to participate How are people asked – or what opportunities are available— to participate in the political system? How often are these questions considered in the broader public discourse? The U.S. and other party systems severely constrain the opportunities people have to participate in politics. The limited competition between major political parties constrains their efforts to mobilize new voters into the political process. Movement activists should consider ways to expand the opportunities to be politically active and expand attempts to offer explicit invitations for participation (this was seen in the recent U.S. election, and certainly these efforts can and should be expanded). Likewise, it is essential that efforts be made to look critically at how invitations to participate are received. How welcome or comfortable are new members made to feel when they first attend events? Do they feel safe asking questions about things that are unfamiliar to

them? How open are we to those who are not yet ready to adopt the critical perspectives of more seasoned activists? How do we support active learning processes within our advocacy groups?

Invitations must be crafted in ways that reach diverse communities and that encourage continued political engagement. Activities that provide a sense of political efficacy should be sought out, and attempts to foster shared identities and a sense of community are also crucial to sustaining participation. Finally, mobilizing around broader campaigns to democratize national political systems might do the most to enhance political participation. In short, to reach new groups, there must be efforts to craft new forms of political action and to build political community. This can generate new opportunities to build alliances with community groups that are not explicitly political or that work on issues that are not directly global.

People need to be asked to participate in global politics and to think of themselves as part of a society that extends beyond national borders. Transnational movements are particularly important to the development of new structures to bring people into global political processes. Currently there are no parties or elections for representatives to international bodies. These people are appointed by governments, and very few citizens even know who represents them in international forums. Many governments prefer to keep citizens out of the global political arena so that they are freer to adopt positions that their constituents might not support. Citizen efforts to promote a people's assembly to the United Nations as well as attempts to organize local variants of such citizens' assemblies (such as local World Social Forums) can encourage more people to learn about the issues being discussed in the international arena, and it can help them generate better understandings of the needs and concerns of people in different parts of the world.

In sum, progressive changes in global institutions require a more concerted effort to develop concrete proposals for *practicing* democracy at a global level. Moreover, it is clear that democracy at any level will be impossible without attempts to cultivate global-level democracy. Allies that would help support the goal of democratizing global institutions can be found across the spectrum of political views, as even defenders of global trade liberalization frequently acknowledge the need for transparency.¹⁹ But supporters of democracy must be wary of the anti-democratic trends that are at work, and they must actively encourage broader public debate about democracy and the role of dissent in democratic polities. They must also be prepared for difficult work within their own local organizations and in the broader environment.

Without concerted efforts to advance democracy in the global political system, there is a grave risk that the growing numbers of people facing few opportunities in the global economy will have no stake in the continuation of the existing political order. The movement organizations I discussed here represent one response to that crisis. But another response is one that does not seek transnational unity but rather advances identity conflicts that divide groups and that define conflicts in ways that complicate efforts to resolve differences in peaceful ways. Efforts to foster multilateralism within the UN framework must build upon the strengths of transnational organizations to cultivate new forms of participation that expand both participation and stakes in the global multilateral system. A multilateral system that contributes to growing inequality and political exclusion will only foster new global conflicts and hinder collective efforts to solve urgent crises like the HIV/AIDS epidemic or environmental devastation. In short, the work of TSMOs and other NGOs to foster global problem-solving within multilateral institutions should be recognized as a foundation for a future world order that confronts the underlying sources of global problems rather than one that coerces the weak to accept the policies favored by the strongest actors in the global arena. The success of the so-called "war on terror" will depend far more upon strengthening those groups that advocate a greater democratization of global institutions – an inherently nonviolent claim – than upon waging a hot war against militant forms of resistance.

NOTES

- ¹Most critical analysts reject the pejorative “anti-globalization” label that commercial media outlets have attached to the movement, even if some people within the movement use the term. Even a cursory look at the wide range of discourses in this movement demonstrates a strong commitment to building global ties and celebrating the diversity of groups that are part of a common struggle. The naming of the movement varies somewhat according to region and ideology, with some emphasizing its anti-capitalist elements and others preferring the more limited anti-neoliberal or anti-corporate globalization tag. In Europe, the term alter-globalization movement is more prominent. But regardless of the different names applied to this broad and diverse movement, the common threads of opposition to neoliberal forms of (economic) globalization and a strong commitment to more participatory and democratic forms of global relations are pronounced.
- ²Following common practice among scholars and practitioners, I use the terms global North and global South to refer to the early industrializing countries of the OECD and to the later industrializing or Third World countries, respectively.
- ³Markoff describes a “double democratic deficit” as states become increasingly constrained by supranational actors and institutions at the same time as they are relinquishing traditional authority in the areas of welfare and the economy.
- ⁴This is not a comprehensive list, but rather it seeks to capture the most influential streams of social change activism that involved some element of transnational communication, exchange, or cooperation.
- ⁵For examples of movements of this era, see, e.g., Keck and Sikkink (1998); Finnemore (1996); Boswell and Chase-Dunn (2000); Wittner (1997); and Chatfield (2004).
- ⁶The non-randomized survey by Benchmark Environmental Consulting yielded 500 responses, 54% of which were from organizations in the global South. 62% were from organizations that did not have formal Consultative Status with any United Nations agency.
- ⁷Not only did UN conferences provide substantive focal points and meeting opportunities, but international agencies provided some funding for representatives from poor parts of the world, especially to travel to international meetings. Private foundations and civil society groups also helped support travel by under-represented groups to global conferences.
- ⁸Median numbers for both IGO and NGO ties was 5 in 2000 and 2 and 1, respectively in 1983.
- ⁹The percentages of multi-issue groups in each year rose from 12% to 17% in that time period. Multi-issue groups include groups working on environment and development issues, as well as any combination of other aims such as human rights, economic justice, peace, etc.
- ¹⁰I qualify this because large-scale protests against the IMF and World Bank had long occurred in the global South. What was new in the 1990s was that Northern activists were actively working to disrupt the international meetings of these bodies, which were generally in global North cities.
- ¹¹Trade agreements have superceded other international treaties in practice if not in actual law, since the global trade bodies have far stronger enforcement mechanisms than do other international organizations, which are often based upon non-binding agreements or on legally binding treaties that lack resources to punish non-compliance. The huge potential costs of trade sanctions creates a chilling effect so that few countries even attempt to challenge the prioritization of trade over other forms of international law.
- ¹²It bears noting that the groups in question here were those supporting arms control and disarmament, including the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and its director, Jody Williams. Such groups may receive funding from international agencies because their missions complement those of the UN Charter and/or of the treaty bodies involved. Moreover, those funds generally come from voluntary contributions of member governments rather than from contractual dues obligations. The U.S. position is understandable, but ironic given the history of U.S. support for civil society representation at the UN—particularly on human rights issues.
- ¹³An official from the national branch of the International Chamber of Commerce served on the Costa Rican delegation to the 1944 United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference in Bretton Woods (Charnovitz 1997: 249).
- ¹⁴WTO Guidelines for Arrangements on Relations with NGOs state “it would not be possible for NGOs to be directly involved in the work of the WTO or its meetings, because of the politically sensitive nature of trade negotiations. The value of informal dialogue and information exchange with NGOs is recognized, but “primary responsibility for taking into account the different elements of public interest which are brought to bear on trade and policy making [lies at the national level]” (WTO guidelines cited in Krut 1997:32). Given this supposed interest within the WTO to limit debates about public interest to domestic political arenas, it is ironic that the organization cites the fact that it also helps governments “ward off powerful [domestic] lobbies” and “narrow sectoral interests” as one of its major benefits (<http://www.wto.org/wto/10ben/10ben09.htm>, Retrieved 5/11/00).
- ¹⁵Virtually all of the arrests of peaceful demonstrators were overturned and police use of force was formally sanctioned in

many of the cases. Nevertheless, these legal victories occurred well after the events themselves, insuring that the images of dissenters as criminal will linger in the views of much of the public.

¹⁶*Activists in the global South have always faced, and continue to face, high levels of government repression, but what is different now is that repression is on the rise in the global North.*

¹⁷*For instance, despite considerable emphasis on the Iraq war, groups at the European Social Forum in October 2004 did not consider specific strategies for focusing pressure from international civil society on either the U.S. elections or the war.*

¹⁸*The Center for Deliberative Polling at the University of Texas, Austin, has been conducting regular “National Issues Conventions” in collaboration with the Lehrer News Hour/Public Broadcasting System. A representative random sample of Americans are polled before and after they review background materials, participate in small-group discussions, and raise questions to panels of experts <http://www.la.utexas.edu/research/delpol/bluebook%202003/2003index.html>.*

¹⁹*See, Esty, “Non-Governmental Organizations at the World Trade Organization.”*

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Institute on Globalization and the HUMAN CONDITION

The Institute on Globalization and the Human Condition was created in January 1998 following the designation of globalization and the human condition as a strategic area of research by the Senate of McMaster University. Subsequently, it was approved as an official research center by the University Planning Committee. The Institute brings together a group of approximately 30 scholars from both the social sciences and humanities. Its mandate includes the following responsibilities:

- a facilitator of research and interdisciplinary discussion with the view to building an intellectual community focused on globalization issues.*
- a centre for dialogue between the university and the community on globalization issues*
- a promoter and administrator of new graduate programming*

In January 2002, the Institute also became the host for a Major Collaborative Research Initiatives Project funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada where a group of over 40 researchers from across Canada and abroad are examining the relationships between globalization and autonomy.

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circulates papers by members of the Institute as well as other faculty members and invited graduate students at McMaster University working on the theme of globalization. Scholars invited by the Institute to present lectures at McMaster will also be invited to contribute to the series.

Objectives:

To foster dialogue and awareness of research among scholars at McMaster and elsewhere whose work focuses upon globalization, its impact on economic, social, political and cultural relations, and the response of individuals, groups and societies to these impacts. Given the complexity of the globalization phenomenon and the diverse reactions to it, it is helpful to focus upon these issues from a variety of disciplinary perspectives.

To assist scholars at McMaster and elsewhere to clarify and refine their research on globalization in preparation for eventual publication.

“Democratizing Globalization? Impacts and Limitations of Transnational Social Movements”

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