"Scaling Social Media: From Local Snapshots to Global Hashtags"

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Part of Conference:
Global Issues and Digital Media:
Integrating Latin American and Caribbean Themes into the Curriculum

Audience: Miami-Dade County High School Teachers
Length: 9:15 – 10:45. (1.5 hours).
Time budgeting:
>   15 min – introductions and names (what does each participant teach)
>   45 min – lecture
>   30 min – practice (create something on smart phone or computer. work in groups)

Outline of Lecture:

1. **Pedagogy**

A) value of "**scaling**" – if I can get students to understand how this works locally, then I can give them a basic understanding of how these processes function on a global scale

B) Passive vs Active Engagement with Social Media

Adorno &Horkheimer's 1944 essay "The Cultural Industry" is a diatribe against the mass-production of culture. Criticizing specifically television, radio and magazines, A&H made three critical arguments regarding how mass-culture had framed power relations in the twentieth century. **First**, although they recognized that the culture industry was democratic in terms of consumption--radio, for example, was free to all who could afford a transmitter--they asserted that the culture industry reinforced a strict social hierarchy and uneven power relations. Production was controlled by a small group of elites and consumption was structured through hierarchies of value and quality. Only the elite had the power of speech, as the new types of material culture trained consumers to listen and internalize, never to speak. The culture industry metaphorically and literally robbed consumers of their political voices. **Second**, this loss of speech extended to a loss of critical thought. The totalizing ubiquity of cultural consumption and their cookie-cutter forms left consumers unable to envision alternatives, unable to imagine difference, unable to even articulate their own selves without using consumer objects to do so. **Finally**, A&H argued the culture industry was constructed in a way that co-opted dissenters and appropriated dissent. This may have been the worst for A&H as it suggested there was no alternative to the totalitarian power project of the culture industry. Even those who tried to find a way out would just be opening new doors for the industry to enter.

But if we can teach students to actively engage (and intellectually engage) with social media, then we can teach them a critical thinking style that becomes constant (an

awareness of the political aspects of personal conversations, of news feeds, of global snapshots). In addition, we reap the benefit of students that learn to speak in meaningful ways, resulting from their own observations and conclusions. This empowers students, and prepares them for the professional world.

2. **The Example:**
   Presentation of global urban issue challenges AND the toolbox for hope:
   Challenges:
   - gentrification
   - systematic violence
   - physical destruction of communities
   - food deserts
   - informal segregation
   - private-sector walls and security.

   Toolbox for Hope:
   - Cultural Hybridity
   - Cultural Survivals
   - Grassroots Organizations
   - Collectives, Nonprofits, NGOs
   - Progressive State Action (such as inclusionary zoning)

3. **The Practice:**

Explanation of Various Tools and how to use them.

1. Examples of Histogram (what to ask of the students in their posts)

2. How to set up an Instagram account

3. How to run Instagram from Computer

   safari:
   Open Safari and head to Preferences > Advanced and make sure Show Develop Menu in Menu Bar is toggled on. From there, head to the Instagram website and log in to your account. Then select Develop > User Agent > Safari - iOS 10 - iPhone.

   The page will reload. You can upload photos this way, but you lose access to the filters. The other option is a third party app such as Flume or Uplet. Otherwise just use your phone.

   Firefox and Chrome: (install an add-on that "spoofs" the user agent, then download. click on the add-on and choose "ios iphone")

4. What students are supposed to do (hashtag and then tag you). ALSO: options for private upload (if students don't want to mix public and private spheres).

5. Embedding Instagram into website, LMS, or presentation

  – Snapwidget (to get this social media embedded in your LMS).

Global urban issue concepts.

1. **gentrification.** The process of landowning elite ("gentry") purchasing and building up a neighborhood of primarily renters. The process of building up new residential and commercial zones raises the property value of the surrounding areas. Renters usually lose their rented houses and, struggling to find alternative housing in the area, they move to another zone, another city, or become homeless.

Where do we see this in Miami? We saw this most clearly in Wynwood, which transformed in the 1990s and early 2000s. The area was formerly known as Little Puerto Rico. Investors such as Goldman Properties (a company that had previously developed South Beach) used real estate development to attract tech companies, art galleries, food and commercial spaces. Many of the working-class Puerto Ricans ended up moving to Orlando.

2. **Systematic violence (or "structural violence").** Individual acts of violence are what we know well: assault, theft, murder. This is the violence that mass media outlets focus on: it is easy to identify, and allows viewers to polarize good vs evil. Systematic violence refers to non-individual actors (projects, legislation, and institutions) that do harm to groups of people (an immigrant community, wage workers, the elderly, veterans). We usually consider this to be an act that hinders such a group from meeting its basic needs (access to food, healthcare, education).

Sociologists talk about "life chances," (thank you Max Weber), referring to an individual's access to resources both tangible (food, shelter) and immaterial (education, healthcare). When an institution or law takes away life chances from a specific community, this is structural violence.

Where do we see this in Miami? The food deserts we will talk about may be such an example. The taking away of affordable housing could be one. The cutting of women's care, such as through plannedparenthood budget cuts, is another (it targets women that lack alternatives for access to healthcare).

4. Food deserts – this is a term that cropped up in journalist in the 1990s to describe urban spaces that lack fresh and affordable food. Generally any place that has no large grocery store, farmer's market, or food cooperative within multiple square miles is considered a food desert. Why are these a problem? Because impoverished families lack cars. As a result, they are left to purchase food in places where they can walk, such as

corner drugstores, gas stations, fast food chains, and small mom-and-pop shops. In these spaces, produce is scarce, most food is canned or processed, and prices are high.

Where does this happen in Miami? I have not done formal research on this, but in the areas where I move around in Miami, I generally consider the food deserts to be in parts of Little Haiti and Wynwood, then in Brownsville and in parts of Allapattah, finally in Liberty City and Overtown.

5. **Informal segregation** – In teaching informal segregation in Miami, I figure it is worth making a distinction between two kinds. One involves the tendency of immigrant to want to reside in neighborhoods that have other members of their own communities. This allows them some sense of belonging, the ease of communicating in one's home language, cultural familiarity, and the possibility of restaurant's featuring one's own gastronomy. As this happens citywide, the preference contributes to the first kind of informal segregation: neighborhoods become ethnic. There is not necessarily anything inherently wrong about this. The biggest concern of the state in these cases is (especially when immigrants are speaking a language other than English) is that the immigrants may take much longer to learn the host language.

There is another kind of informal segregation: that by which certain races, ethnicities, or communities are blocked from taking advantage of public facilities by informal mechanisms. This is more problematic. We see this in several ways. A clear one was the 1980s decision to end school busing projects that worked for integration. That, combined with white flight to suburbs, made school integration programs difficult to sustain, and informally segregated schools became the norm again.

In the US, marginalized communities tend to be locked in to a single district (or maybe two) in the city. So, in Miami, the homeless often concentrate downtown, and then you may see the impoverished African American community in Liberty City and Brownsville, and the impoverished Dominicans in the rougher areas of Allapattah. The elite tend to sprawl to a variety of suburban or elite zones. In Miami, there are elite residences in Coconut Grove, Cutler Bay, Coral Gables, and Brickell, to name a few. In most of middle America, the elite spread out in suburban rings around the city.

In Latin America, things are often reversed. It is the poor that sprawl in rings around the city, and the rich that concentrate in a single area or two. In São Paulo, Brazil, for example, the elite live in the Pinheiros and Morumbi neighborhoods, with the impoverished settling for undending miles around the periphery. This might be something to bring to the attention of those of you high school teachers that have recent immigrant students in your classes (and you could even set up a conversation or comparison project about the differences).

Segregation also occurs in a way that is somewhere in a grey zone between formal and informal: this occurs the private forces rather than public ones, and happens through the mechanisms of walls of diverse forms.

[check out the *orçamento participativo* program used in Porto Alegre, Brazil, allowing the broader community to have a decision on how local budgets are designated].

6. **Private-sector walls and Security.** [take notes from Caldeira's work, and try to double it as a lecture for the History of Brazil course].

2. Toolbox for Hope:

– Cultural Hybridity and Cultural Survivals

Gentrification is able to happen because of the creation of desire within consumers: these consumers are developers, then real estate agents, and finally individual consumers such as young hipsters or visiting tourists. What is the object of desire here? The place offers a certain experience, or I think, or a mixture of experiences. One of the less sinister of those offered by gentrified spaces are the experiences that comes with a distinct *sense of place:* this is what history, tradition, and the arts bring. So a tourist enjoys being in Wynwood because of the sense of place brought by the overwhelming color along the walls, and all the talent that has been sprayed on the walls. A visitor in Little Haiti might be excited to see a performance of local dancers at the Little Haiti Cultural Center, or be enticed by the local food scene, wanting a steaming plate of *griyo* and *djon djon*. So history, food, sounds (music), and colors (art) all bring this sense of space, and people like to be there.

One of the best parts of neighborhood restoration and **beautification** is that **outside funds** can help lift up an impoverished community, allowing that community to put time and money into the strongest aspects of their material culture. (that's *cultural survival*). And **hybridity** goes right along with that – when you mix different dance forms, food ingredients, artistic styles, you create unique senses of place, and you also create places that might be more inviting and more accessible to outsiders. We sometimes criticize hybrid forms of cultural production with phrases like "watered down" "inauthentic" "sell-out" or "mainstream." And yet these sorts of popularized faces to ethnic music (think of "despacito" as an introduction to Puerto Rican culture), while they might disturb those of us that grew up in the culture, they can provide a bridge to deeper study for interested outsiders who, years later, might dedicate their life to preserving those traditions.

– Grassroots Organizations
– Collectives, Nonprofits, NGOs

– **Progressive State Action** (such as **inclusionary zoning).** States can use legislation to require that commercial development projects in neighborhoods set aside a set number of residential spaces designated to be rented at affordable rates. Another possible state project is *upzoning* which increases the number of units allowed to be created by a residential complex. If coupled with inclusionary zoning, it can work as a "carrot" (incentive) to make developers less frustrated with inclusionary zoning. States, however, are often hesitant (or loathe) to put

down too many regulations regarding development, because too many regulations slows down development, or makes potential developers think twice about pursuing their projects in that city. And city leaders want development in the city.

Helpful Websites:

https://hyperallergic.com/321133/in-miamis-little-haiti-a-muralist-fights-gentrification-one-wall-at-a-time/

https://archpaper.com/2017/04/miami-gentrification-working-class-neighborhoods/

https://thenewtropic.com/integration-vs-gentrification/

http://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/gentrification-threatening-to-destroy-little-haiti-community-leaders-warn-8091560

"Right to Wynwood." Documentary. https://vimeo.com/110682099

http://www.structuralviolence.org/structural-violence/

http://www.lincolninst.edu/publications/articles/urban-spatial-segregation