

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute 2020 Volume I: The Place of Woman: Home, Economy, and Politics

International Trade and its Implications for Female Empowerment

Curriculum Unit 20.01.08 by Sean Gorman

Unit Compelling Questions and Overarching Structure

Introducing students to globalization and the international trade system could easily fill an entire course—let alone a six-week long unit; that being said, I have put a lot of forethought into where the content I have been researching could fit into an organized thematic framework for students to best connect the interworking concepts being presented to them. Similarly, I have designed a series of "Compelling Questions" meant to overarch the entirety of the unit and guide students to actively formulate potential answers using evidence gathered from each new lesson. The purpose of prioritizing these larger, organizational considerations at the start of designing this unit relates to the planning methodology of "backwards design." This planning strategy asks teachers to first consider the skills, standards, and outcomes they want to students to achieve before deciding on the lesson activities they want to use to present the content. While this can seem counterintuitive to many new teachers, as it once did to me, planning "backwards" by establishing the end goal for a unit eventually becomes a natural impulse. By writing out this narrative focusing on content objectives before writing down any potential lesson plans for presenting it, the structure of our seminar work schedule has encouraged these same procedures for developing this original unit.

While the unifying focus of my unit will be the outcomes of globalization and trade in women's lives, I have found it helpful to divide the content into two distinct sections—women in "developed" and "developing" nations around the world. The distinction between countries that fall under these labels was not based on my singular judgement, but rather a dichotomy that academics have discussed at length as emerging from the international trade system of the past several decades.¹ Some common features that define nations considered "developed" in this system (to name just a few) include a service-based economy, an importation of goods produced from manufacturing/more labor-intensive industries, and a powerful voice in setting global trade regulations. In contrast, a few features that can be used to identify "developing" nations include an export-oriented economy, rapid urbanization, and the implementation of "shock therapy" structural adjustments promoted by global economic organizations. These distinct categories will provide a useful framework for students to gain a fundamental understanding of how different countries around the world interact with the same system. It would, of course, be more accurate to consider these categories as ends of a spectrum—with several nations existing somewhere in between "developing" and "developed." I plan on addressing this nuance while not only introducing the unit, but also at various points throughout. By

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contrasting case studies from countries like the U.S. with Bangladesh, I plan to highlight the opposite ends of the same global system while working to avoid the promotion of a dichotomous, uncritical perspective of the world.

If these different types of countries described above provide the setting for my unit, the "Compelling Questions" have been developed to focus attention to the theme of analyzing global trade through its outcomes on women's lives. My goal while developing these questions was to both tap into students' personal curiosity about women's issues while simultaneously providing a "roadmap" for some of the international issues that will be discussed throughout the unit. In attempting to meet students at their background knowledge of women's issues, one of the first compelling questions of the unit asks: Why is there a gender wage-gap in an overwhelming majority of economies around the world? Most students I have spoken to in other classes have encountered narratives about women making 77 cents to the dollar that men make in America—with some even engaging with online debates regarding this gendered wage gap.² It seems to be an issue that never fails to generate class discussion, which I hope to steer in an academically productive direction by presenting this at the unit's opening. This effort to begin students in familiar territory will be supported by the first section of the unit focusing on "developed" economies like the United States. Throughout the unit, I am planning to use the familiarity of America as a reference point for "intra" and "inter" comparisons between countries with similar and different levels of economic development to the U.S.; this first compelling question regarding the wage gap has, thus, been written to be used in a global context and applied to later case studies after students first understand this issue in an American context.

Although the other "Compelling Questions" I generated so far for this unit will likely have less immediate resonation with students' prior knowledge of women's issues, they are juxtaposed with the question of the wage gap to highlight their similar recurring significance in every global case study that will be explored in this unit. These questions, in no particular order, ask: How do social factors constrain women to disproportionately pursue certain professions over others? What are the consequences of a globalized economic system overwhelmingly upheld by male theorists and politicians? How can the structural economic changes of industrialization both promote and hinder feminist outcomes in global societies? When one considers these open-ended questions all at once, it becomes apparent that they have been designed to be answered over a longer period of study rather than a single class session. As a teacher, creating these complicated compelling questions pushes me to approach unit planning as a challenging academic exercise, which allows me to share in learning about this material with my students. These questions have played an important role in structuring the focus of content I have gathered for the past several weeks—providing me with insights about how students may react when presented with a similar academic situation. As a result, I view deciding on these "Compelling Questions" early into this project as serving a dual purpose of helping me gather more relevant content while modeling the potential research processes that could occur as students participate within this unit.

1st Major Unit Content Focus—The "Developed" Nations

The feminist movement is nothing unfamiliar or novel to the United States. Since Seneca Falls and until 1919-1920, "suffragettes" were advocating for women's right to vote. Following this "first-wave" of feminism, Betty Friedan alongside thousands of other free-thinking women rebelled against traditional gender roles and sexism to ignite a "second-wave" in the 1960s-70s.³ Today, a third-wave (and some even arguing a fourth-wave) has shifted feminist narratives towards intersectionality and individual autonomy, but has persisted in advocating for a general equality between the sexes.⁴ One issue that has persisted throughout these different iterations of feminist movements has been gender wage inequality—women earning significantly less than

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their male counterparts. There is undoubtably a historical precedent of sexism at play when discussing this issue considering the decades it took for women to achieve sizable representation in the U.S. workforce following their momentary surge during WWII; however, approaching this debate requires more nuance today than it did during the 1960s when gender roles were being explicitly promoted by American society and its most prominent institutions. Now that women have made significant representational strides over the past several decades, even overtaking men in areas such as college attendance rates, the argument has gained popularity that women now have the equal opportunity to participate in the job market and any statistics saying otherwise represent a failure for them to reach their own potential.

While working to respond to this line of thinking, I was fortunate to have my independent research supported by the readings and discussions with which we engaged in our group seminar. In fact, several of the content considerations compiled for this unit represent a synthesis between the topic I selected at the start of this project and the natural overlaps with the subjects of our weekly sessions. That being said, to argue that women have an equal capacity to participate in the American economy and earn the same wage as men represents a line of neoliberal thinking that fails to consider the social variables that complicate this narrative. The first and most obvious difference between male and females participating in the workforce is biological—specifically, the potential for pregnancy to disrupt one's ability to maintain their regular schedule in most professions. No matter the individual, pregnancy is a long-term, physically taxing experience with the potential for several complications on a women's health. How does America respond when this obvious challenge befalls one of its employees that many have argued no longer have barriers to succeed in the workplace? The government does not guarantee any form of paid maternity leave—one of three major countries in the world and the only "developed" country not to do so.7 This places the onus on employers in the U.S. (apart from companies operating in four states) to choose to provide paid maternity leave, which would be inadvisable for companies trying to maximize their profits. Ironically though, it seems that the strongest advocates for this "free-market" approach to childcare subsidies are the same proponents that women currently have an unhindered, equal opportunity to earn the same wages as men in American society.

As one could predict, the lack of support provided to working mothers under the U.S. system has had some economically devastating outcomes. One assessment from 2015 found that, even though women made up 47% of the workforce and act as the sole or primary breadwinners in 40% of American households, 88% of working mothers have no access to paid parental leave. In a nation that has designed itself to operate by providing incentives for economically rational decision-making in pursuit of prosperous outcomes, not guaranteeing maternity leave to women financially punishes those who choose to have children while working. In effect, it disincentivizes working women from having enough children to support older generations of Americans in the future—creating national security concerns.9 Similarly, the lack of financial support for working parents has been linked to increased mental health struggles and worse long-term health concerns for both the mother and newborn. 10 These negative consequences of America's lack of paid parental leave can be assessed relative to other "developed" economies around the world. Several Scandinavian countries, like Finland and Sweden, have comprehensive social programs that provide this financial support with proven benefits; however, these supports alone do not remedy all the problems that have been noted for American working women—as the birthrate in these countries has been falling below the numbers suggested by experts to sustain the population. 11 What other factors, then, force women to choose between starting families or having an equal opportunity to participate in their country's workforce?

By returning to Sweden as a "developed" point of comparison to the U.S., another notable factor to understanding the gender wage gap that persists in "developed" nations are the shared characteristics of

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their highest paying jobs. While sexism and negative perceptions about women in the workplace absolutely play a role in these disparities (in ways that are insidious and difficult to quantify), several studies have focused specifically on how the schedule constraints disproportionately faced by women can significantly impact their lifetime earnings. As we have encountered in our seminar readings, couples faced with the prospect of caring for a new child (even when holding progressive ideals on housework before the child is born) are significantly more likely to default to traditional gender roles and have the women take on more "household" responsibilities after the birth, 12 This trend is reinforced by sociological data that shows women in heterosexual relationships perceiving their male partners to be more anxious about their financial situation as they approach an equal salary; in other words, most women feel discouraged from approaching or surpassing men's "breadwinner" status in their relationship, which creates social pressure encouraging them away from opportunities to increase their salaries. 13 The result of all these social pressures placed on women has caused them to take on a disproportionate share of household responsibilities across all of these "developed" countries, constraining the time they can dedicate to their careers compared to men. Although it is true that women have earned sizable representation in most areas of the economy, it turns out the professionals earning the highest wages have reached this position by investing unconventional working hours in the private sector—the exact times in which working parents have familial responsibilities. 14 When the burden of childcare falls primarily on women in these countries, this results in a gendered inaccessibility to managerial and leadership positions; as a point of speculation, these same positions would theoretically be consequential enough to dismantle workplace cultures that allow these sexist time constraints to exist within a company in the first place.

Unfortunately, the only existing solution to equalizing the burden of housework between spouses has been to hire "nannies" to take on these responsibilities—an option limited to the wealthiest citizens of these "developed" countries. While many women are compelled by social and economic pressures to sacrifice time investing in their careers to raise children, a fraction of new couples who both earn sizable incomes find it more cost effective to pay a regular wage for an individual to raise their children. Although this is an avenue pursued by wealthy individuals, the repetitive nature of housework combined with the incentive for couples not to forego more of their paycheck than working would be worth has created an demand for the cheapest possible labor to fill these positions. Like many labor-intensive, low paying jobs in "developed" nations, these "nanny" roles have been overwhelmingly filled by immigrants pursuing opportunities for wages that would otherwise be unavailable in their home countries. As the name suggests, what makes this position unique is its feminization, which can be attributed to the social roles and skillsets that these women gained in their own home lives. 15 While one could argue these positions as a "solution" that promotes gender inequality between spouses, I would complicate this narrative by pointing out the consequences of this system. First, as I previously mentioned, without any substantial subsidies for raising children hiring a "nanny" will not affordable for most American households. Next, by filling the role of "homemaker" with an alternative female figure, this reinforces the assumptions of gender roles pitted against working wives that they have a vested interest in disrupting by prioritizing their careers. Finally, economists have found that women immigrating to fill these roles in "developed" countries create a "cascade of effects down the gendered chain of care" which forces laborers from even poorer positions in the world economy to disrupt their livelihoods to makeup the gap in housework they left behind (and so on and so on). 16 The practice of importing labor to support wealthy, multi-income households may seem like a solution to strive for at first glance, however, further investigation highlights its unsustainability for promoting widespread global female equality.

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Who Leads Who?—"Developed" Nations within International Economic Organizations

Gendered temporal restraints are a reality for women across every "developed" nation and persist despite social policies designed to promote gender equality. After finding similarly negative outcomes for women working in the U.S. compared to more regulated economies like Sweden, the question remains: Why do Scandinavian countries still have a gendered wage gap and low birthrate despite social programs explicitly designed to support working women? The answer lies in the private sector and the time constraints that were just discussed. While Sweden's public sector jobs have been strictly regulated to fill positions with women, keep salaries consistent, and hours limited, applying these same rules to the private sector would limit these industries' ability to compete within a global system designed to prioritize economic efficiency over social welfare. Even though Swedish women have a guaranteed income if they chose to have children, in the long run it would actually be exponentially more costly for a women to disrupt her career and lose out on any salary/pension increases she would earn from continually working.¹⁷ This revelation (while taking several datasets and critical analysis to reach) connects back to the overall context for my unit—globalization and international trade. When one follows the individual economic incentives up the ladder of private enterprise to the corporate level, they inevitably reach the international supply chains connected to their country's economy. Understanding that these "developed" nations collectively hold the most influence required to set the agenda of international trade will be the conclusion presented to students before transitioning to the second half of this unit.

I have always found lessons regarding the World Trade Organization and International Monetary Fund to be very esoteric, which is troubling considering the economic power these groups hold. It seems like this topic tends to be relegated towards the end of units or curriculums and only memorized as a vocabulary term rather than being critically analyzed in high school classrooms. After building upon this basic understanding of these organizations through several independent research projects over the years, I was struck by the disproportionate influence that wealthy nations, especially the United States, have in promoting and setting policy for these organizations. While an argument can (and has) been made that this system allows the nations with the biggest stake in the system proportional influence in setting the global economic agenda, this can be counteracted by highlighting the consequences of prioritizing wealthy countries' economic interests over others. 18 By flexing its international economic influence, America effectively works to "have its cake and eat it too" with regards to government subsidies. Although the WTO and World Bank work to disincentivize smaller, struggling economies from investing in social services through "shock therapy" loan programs, America actively invests huge shares of its GDP to artificially lower the prices of its agriculture products, undermining this same commitment free trade it pushes onto weaker economies. 19 In other words, America reaps the benefits of free trade from other countries by unloading its goods with minimal tariff restrictions, yet refuses to give these same nations (many of whom are forced to specialize their economies in agriculture) a fair opportunity to reciprocate these gains. What are the policies that America then pushes these smaller, struggling, and outcompeted countries to adopt for the sake of maximizing global free trade? More deregulation, a global cycle entrapping many nations from ever enjoying the "fruits of their own labor" through investing into domestic social welfare programs—including subsidies that could potentially lessen gender wage disparities.

Global trends shifting national investment from public to private industries can account for the incentive structure that prioritizes deregulation over equitable social outcomes, a system which reinforces traditional gender roles rather than challenging them. As a final point of analysis to conclude this half of the unit, it would be worthwhile to return to the compelling question asking students the consequences of a global economic system predominantly developed and controlled by men. When one compares the more recent contributions

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of female and minority economists against the neoclassical theories developed by white men since the 1700s, a more dynamic field emerges that can account for previously overlooked social variables; for example, while classical economists have argued women should rationally "specialize" in housework to maximize their utility, it took the perspective of a female economist to call out this theory as cyclically reinforcing traditional gender roles.²⁰ Similarly, it has been corroborated in several studies that women generally prefer to compete less than men—a disposition that could play a beneficial role in reversing the neoliberal consensus pushing global deregulations of private industries.²¹ This theory has already been put into action by Halla Tomasdottir in Iceland, where she and her female coworkers pushed back against the culture of blind risk-taking at their investment firms by founding their own company committed to understanding monetary risks by avoiding feedback loops.²² This example highlights just some of the potential benefits that could be gained from more equitable gender representation in positions of economic power. If male-dominated leadership of developed nations continue to promote aggressive deregulation while competing from a position granting them unfair advantages, the global playing field will continued to be skewed towards unrealistic goals economic goals only attainable by slashing national social spending.²³ When these national laws codifying equal pay for all genders have been undermined by economic incentives for private industries not to hire women and lose capital investment during maternity leave, it becomes reasonable to suspect these systems have been purposefully designed to retain the power of the leaders promoting this status quo.²⁴ Although these "developed" nations can act as they are hapless victims of a larger, deregulated global system, this narrative overlooks the influence these nations collectively hold in setting the world economic agenda.

2nd Major Unit Content Focus—The "Developing" Nations

After marking the halfway point of the unit by assessing the organizations created and managed by the world's "developed" economies, I plan on spending the second half exploring case studies of women on the other side of this system. The purposeful ordering of discussing the United States and its economic cohorts to introduce this unit not only serves to connect to students' prior knowledge on the subject, but to also model the "end goal" set by international organizations for countries just beginning to industrialize their economies. Just as "developed" economies have both positive and negative societal outcomes for women, countries in pursuit of this end goal similarly face the potential for experiencing mixed results. In one study of over 180 countries integrating into the globalized economy, researchers found that outcomes for women more often improve after opening a country to the world.²⁵ After joining international organizations, most countries in this study noted measurable improvements in female health, literacy, and economic/political participation; however, some of these countries had negative outcomes for women after globalizing—including environmental degradation and *limiting* opportunities for female societal participation.²⁶ These nuanced outcomes for women living in "developing" economies must be analyzed by first breaking down how globalization transformed their existing societal structure. Did the model for integrating into the world economy disrupt or compliment the traditional culture in which women found themselves throughout previous generations?

In order to evaluate the impact of globalization on women in "developing" countries, a helpful starting point would be for students to recognize and trace the economic linkages of "downward harmonization."²⁷ This process, which can be traced all the way back to the United States during its 19th century industrialization, begins with a nation transitioning to an economy dominated by manufacturing. Some of the earliest places this occurred was the Northeastern United States and Great Britain, who saw rapid shifts from a dispersed agrarian society to one that condensed into cities for factory work.²⁸ While conditions were initially harsh and dangerous, over time these manufacturers were compelled to improve their working conditions and reduce

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their harmful emissions—which lead to societal-wide wage increases and purchasing power. These developments funded the emergence of service industries that offered entertainment and conveniences for those with an increasing share of disposable income. Eventually, these first manufacturing hubs became so wealthy that it became too expensive to pay factory workers a living wage for these locations, which pushed companies to seek cheaper labor to maintain their company's profitability. As a result, the chain of "downward harmonization" began.

One of the first times manufacturers relocated following this system was when the U.S. South began hosting textile factories around the early 20th century. As this area was already primed to produce large quantities of cotton due to its slaveholding past, this area had a vast supply of raw materials that made it an ideal location for textile mills.²⁹ Similarly, the U.S. South's agriculturally-oriented economy provided little opportunities for women in the workforce—leaving a totally untapped source of labor in the eyes of Northern factory owners. Just as U.S. textile industries commonly practiced when they were first established in Massachusetts, the employment of young women was a purposeful decision to both cut costs and to employ a workforce that male owners perceived as more docile relative to other men.³⁰ While these justifications can be understood as blatantly rooted in sexist notions that deem women inferior to men, this mindset has unfortunately persisted in each economy developing through the process of "downward harmonization." This persistent closemindedness is no coincidence, but rather the result of the structural characteristics that manufacturers seek out when deciding which societies can most profitably sustain their factories. It has been noted by anthropologists how societies primarily organized around sedentary agriculture (involving the use of heavy plows and other taxing manual labor) subscribe to what many Americans would now consider traditional, outmoded gender roles.31 When we think about the Antebellum South, it can be recalled that, although slavery was eradicated, it was replaced by the eerily similar system of sharecropping that delayed any economic transition away from agriculture in this area for several more decades.³² While the devastation left behind after the Civil War coupled with a societal reluctance to uproot traditions delayed the South from keeping pace with the economic developments of the North, this created a "safety valve" for certain industries to follow once they could no longer sustain rising wages in "developed" cites. As the world became more globalized in the late 20th century, this same phenomenon would continue abroad after Southern wages reached this same ceilina.

If one were to track this chain of "downward harmonization" followed by textile manufacturers throughout the 20th century, the next stop would be Japan, followed by China, before finally reaching Bangladesh where these industries operate in our contemporary world.³³ By following the chronological order in which each nation transitioned to, then away, from export-oriented textile industries, students can understand the transformative effects globalization has had on women's lifestyles in "developing" economies. These will present several unique case studies in which a nuanced, individualized analysis will be required to assess whether women were empowered by their "developing" economies. On one hand, in the context of the same traditional agrarian values-system in which women have little to no life autonomy outside of raising families, factory work provides opportunities to earn wages and participate in their economies as they see fit. The Chinese "hukou" system, for example, facilitated the transition rural mainlanders by the tens of millions to dense urban manufacturing centers along the coast, which resulted in an unprecedented economic autonomy for Chinese women once confined to strict household roles in their previous lifestyles.³⁴ On the other hand, the significance of these improved conditions can become questionable when compared to a "developed" nation in the global economy. These same Chinese "farm girls" who have been said to be thriving under the opportunity presented by the "hukou" system are also working under conditions and wages so poor that they

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have not been legal in the United States for the past century.³⁵ While economists would argue that increasing one's standard of living from that of rural China to New York City would require a gradual economic transition for "organic" development to occur, this does not change the fact that America and other "developed" nations are benefiting from these industries operating at dramatically cheaper prices than their own. While this wage disparity between "developed" and "developing" economies presents a moral dilemma, it represents a well-functioning series of economic incentives that neoliberal scholars argue will naturally grow the wealth of all its participants in time.³⁶ In fact, preserving the status quo of international free trade is currently one of the few areas of bipartisan agreement in U.S. Congress, with both Democrats and Republicans speaking against the economic tariffs imposed by the Trump administration.³⁷ After spending time analyzing the perspectives of "developing" countries that bought into this export-based manufacturing path to prosperity, one can judge if the mutual economic benefits are as worthwhile as advertised by its "developed" proponents; in other words, do wealthier countries really push this system onto agrarian-economies to improve overall standards of living (particularly for women), or is this just a unintended positive outcome of companies seeking out the most vulnerable source of labor to maintain high profits through lowering wages?

Does "Development" into the Global Economy Guarantee Female Empowerment?

In order to provide students with the fullest possible context for considering this complex question throughout the second half of this unit, it would be worthwhile to dedicate at least one lesson to studying an alternative model of economic development for countries beginning to integrate into the global economy. While studying the chain of "downward harmonization" introduces students to several countries who followed a similar pattern of economic development, it by no means accounts for every pathway of entry into this system nor the unique social contexts that distinguish each country. By seeking out the clearest examples of economies that developed through investing in an export-based manufacturing sector, one can point to the East Asian countries included in the aforementioned chain of "downward harmonization" that demonstrate this process;38 however, where do regions such as the Middle East, who have striking cultural and structural differences, fit into this narrative we have created to introduce students to the global economy? This question introduces an important point of comparison that will offer one final insight for understanding how women fair in "developing" countries. Compared to countries such as China, the past several decades of globalization have done little to disrupt the traditional societal constraints placed on women's economic opportunities in many Middle Eastern countries.³⁹ Many Western scholars, no doubt influenced by the negative stereotypes propagated following September 11th, were quick to blame Islam as cultural variable responsible for the lack of gender equity across the region; however, as later economic analyses would correct, the differences in female empowerment could be explained by how these countries entered the global economy. The other variable that was lost by scholars fixated on their negative perceptions of Islam was the abundance of natural resources, specifically oil, shared by many countries in this region.⁴⁰

Although having an abundance of natural resources seems like a blessing for countries participating in a system of global trade, economists have written extensively about how this can have negative implications for female empowerment in "developing" economies due to a phenomenon known as "Dutch Disease." The point of encouraging global free trade is to increase efficiency by having countries sell what they have relative advantages producing—so Middle Eastern countries with large deposits of oil specialize in refining this resource. The global demand for this product has led to huge profits for these oil exporters in a relatively short amount of time, which has subsequently increased the value of their local currencies. While one would initially suspect that this increased value would increase wages and empower women, as we observed happen in several East Asian counties, these patterns of development have one major discrepancy between them. By

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increasing the value of wages through exporting resources rather than developing a manufacturing-based economic infrastructure, there were never any novel opportunities for women to disrupt their traditional household roles to earn wages in factories. In fact, the economic incentives in this situation reinforce patriarchal societal outcomes—as working men earning higher wages have more financial control over their families and can discourage their partners from seeking out their own source of income.⁴¹ Just as "downward harmonization" could be viewed as a model that "developing" economies follow to integrate into the global economy, the term "Dutch Disease" follows a pattern first noted when the Netherlands faced these similarly negative social outcomes soon after the value of their currency was boosted by a mass discovery of oil in their waters.⁴² These case studies add legitimacy to arguments that the outcomes of economic "development" integrating countries into globalized free trade primarily concerns itself with profitability over societal progress. While women have repeatedly found empowerment in globalizing economies that relied on export-based manufacturing, the presence of natural resources valued by "developed" countries would actively undermine momentum towards female economic liberation by eliminating the demand for women in the workplace.⁴³

This returns students once more to the conclusion reached at this unit's halfway point—that the "developed" countries setting the agenda for global trade have prioritized their own economic expansion without actively working to address the negative social consequences of these policies. The gendered income disparities, unrepresentative hiring practices, and active economic repression that prevents women around the world from participating in their societies on an equal footing with men should be viewed as a universal challenge that demands a united response. We live in a time of unprecedented global interconnectedness, a reality that, unfortunately, goes unrecognized by many students who never encounter these complex systems in all their schooling. The importance of this unit will be first and foremost to bring attention to the existence of globalization—pushing back against narratives that America thrives independently outside the support of the world. Once this system is recognized by students, my hope will be for them to apply their understanding to harness the potential of these institutions to address the problems that they perpetuate. Ultimately, it will be up to their generation to recognize this potential and advocate their governments to sacrifice profits for the sake of addressing global female inequality—an outcome that will require a united front of lobbying to overpower the wealth invested in maintaining the status quo.

Classroom Activities

If my narrative represents an organizational framework containing *every* content consideration that I found relevant for gaining a deeper understanding of my unit topic, this next section represents some suggestions for distilling these topics to engage high school-level students. While these examples represent my strategies for implementing this unit within my school context, you may find more utility from this section after modifying it to reflect your unique teaching situation. For instance, these sample lessons have been planned in the context of my school's 90-minute class periods, so it may be necessary to break up some activities across multiple days in classrooms that meet for shorter sessions. Similarly, these lessons should not be mistaken as a completed unit calendar for implementing this unit; rather, teachers should view the following section as a reflection of my teacher's perspective—matching the types of activities I found to best guide students towards addressing the compelling questions laid out at the start of this project. Other educators should, thus, be encouraged to selectively pull from or even build upon the framework presented throughout

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the rest of this unit before implementing these lessons themselves.

While I strive to engage students with a diverse set of learning activities, consistent classroom routines play a major role in the structuring of my lesson plans. The sample lessons provided below, thus, reflect these personal routines, and should be noted before any teacher seeks to adopt this unit within their own course curriculum. First, each of my lessons begins with a "Do Now" question projected onto the board that students must answer as soon as they arrive in class; this question always seeks to "meet students where they are at" by asking them about a topic both relevant in their own lives and the content of the upcoming lesson. After having students share out their answers to this question, I present a daily agenda on the board that lists the different topics and activities planned for the day's class—having student volunteers read this schedule out loud; for reference, I have included images of what these slides will look like for each sample lesson throughout this section. Finally, the activities that make up the large remainder of the lesson always follow a "gradual release" model—beginning with direct teacher instruction before later transitioning to independent/small-group activities. By keeping this overarching lesson framework in mind, along with my use of a projector for sharing key information and directions, one can envision how each sample lesson described below would look being implemented in the classroom.

One more school-specific consideration for this unit will be the unique course context for which it was designed. Since New Haven's required Civics curriculum has only been designed to be implemented across the first half of the school year, my school created "International Issues" as a complementary course to conclude 10th graders' social studies schedule. In order to make the most out of this scheduling gap, the teachers who developed this course adopted four units from The Choices Program—created by Brown University to engage students with contemporary and historical issues overlooked in traditional curricula.⁴⁴ This provided me with the ideal situation for working this original unit into my classes for this upcoming school year; while I am provided with a structure of units related to international issues, I am simultaneously free to substitute the specific skills and content covered in this "supplemental" course with what I have developed in this original unit. I recognize that most teachers will be confined to stricter unit schedules and standards that will make it much more difficult to implement a unit explicitly designed to stray *outside* the focus of traditional high school social studies courses. This disclaimer just provides one final reason why other educators should be encouraged to pull specific teaching philosophies, strategies, and lessons from this project, rather than following it as a holistic guide.

Sample Lesson 1: Understanding America's Gender Pay Gap in a Globalized Context

- Do Now Question (10 mins): "What types of American jobs are predominantly worked by women? What jobs are predominantly men? Are there any jobs that you cannot envision working because of your gender identity?" Students take five minutes to answer these questions projected on the board in their own words as they enter the classroom. Teacher then has students share their responses with partners or out loud for another five minutes to begin introducing topics of the lesson.

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Daily Agenda (mm/dd)

- 1. Video Analysis: Gender Wage Gap
- 2. Making Sense of Wage Narratives
- 3. Close Reading of Academic Text
- 4. Presenting Our Findings
- 5. <u>Homework:</u> Examples of Gendered Employment from Our Own Lives

Compelling Question:

Why is there a gender wage-gap in an overwhelming majority of economies around the world?



- Video Analysis: Gender Wage Gap (15 mins): Students are prompted to draw a simple "T-Chart" in their notes—titling the left column as "Video 1" and the right as "Video 2." Teacher returns to the topic of gender wage disparities and contextualizes it as a politically contentious debate in the modern world. Teacher, then, briefly reviews the elements of developing argumentative writing discussed earlier in the school year and asks students to identify the claim/thesis, supporting evidence, and potential biases present in both videos. After playing five-minute clips from each video, one arguing against the need to address gender wage disparities and the other highlighting the societal detriments of this issue, students will share-out the information they gathered in their notes.
- Making Sense of Wage Narratives (10 mins): Teacher returns to both video clips from the previous activity as examples of the wide-variety of narratives available on the internet to confirm any preexisting opinion on a topic. Students take notes defining the term "confirmation bias" along with strategies for cross-referencing the competing narratives they will encounter online with well-researched conclusions. Teacher concludes by highlighting the common components of sound academic research, distributing an example that will be used for the next class activity.
- Close Reading of Academic Text (25 mins): Students will be broken up into small groups of two to three and assigned a different section of an academic study on the persistence of a gender wage gap in America. For their assigned section, students will be tasked with summarizing the conclusions made by the researchers, finding what evidence they used to support their claims, and explaining in their own words how their section helps support a broader argument that a gender wage gap undermines the American economy. One student from each group will be assigned as "scribe" to record these answers on a guided worksheet while other students will be designated "readers" or "annotators." Teacher circulates around the classroom throughout this activity to support struggling students and formatively assess each group's progress.

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- Presenting Our Findings (15 mins): Each student group will take turns sharing each of the answers they developed from the questions posed during the previous activity. Teacher constructively adds any missing information from student responses to help a general class-wide understanding of the existence of the gender wage gap and the significance of this information coming from an academically vetted source. Teacher collects worksheets from each group at the conclusion of these presentations to grade as a participation/classwork grade.
- Homework: Examples of Gendered Employment from Our Own Lives: Students will be tasked with collecting "data" from their own lives regarding the gender composition of their desired career field. Students must corroborate their findings with at least three academic sources corroborating their statistics. Based on this data, students then evaluate if this career has been gendered in American society or not and how this will affect their own journey to eventually participating in this field.

Sample Lesson 2: Evaluating the Policy Outcomes Global Trade Organizations

- Do Now Question (10 mins): "What types of international program(s) would you propose to combat gender wage inequality in the U.S. and around the world? What would be the major economic, political, and social obstacles that would prevent your organization from achieving this goal?" Students take five minutes to answer these questions projected on the board in their own words as they enter the classroom. Teacher then has students share their responses with partners or out loud for another five minutes to begin introducing topics of the lesson.

Daily Agenda (mm/dd)

- 1. Brief History of the IMF and WTO
- 2. Video Clip: "Life and Debt"
- Evaluating IMF Voting Power
- Charting International Gender Issues: Paid Parental Leave
- Silent Gallery Walk Presentations
- Homework: "Planet Money" Podcast Analysis Questions

Compelling Question:

What are the consequences of a globalized economic system overwhelmingly upheld by male theorists and politicians?

- Daily Agenda (5 minutes): Sample Lesson 2
- Brief History of the IMF and the WTO (15 mins): Teacher distributes guided notetaking sheet(s) for students to record key vocabulary terms being introduced as the origins of these organizations are laid out on the board. The most important of these terms will be "neoliberalism," as an anticipated misconception for

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students will be confusing "liberalism" (free-market economics) with "Liberalism" (progressive political ideals) in the context of American society; by defining and exploring how "neoliberalism" became the economic consensus driving globalism in the 21st century, students will have a clearer understanding of *what* is being evaluated when we scrutinize the policy outcomes of these international organizations.

- Video Clip: "Life and Debt" (20 mins): Teacher cues up a ten minute clip from the documentary "Life and Debt," a movie highlighting how the Jamaican economy had no bargaining power to compete against technologically "developed" countries like the U.S. and U.K. in a "neoliberal" globalized system. Students will be tasked with evaluating how this theoretical system of international free trade exists in practice—developing a critique to the stated goals and outcomes of the IMF and WTO. Teacher asks for volunteers at the conclusion of this video clip to share their counterclaims to the mission statements of these organizations, taking the role of smaller, less-wealthy countries such as Jamaica.
- Evaluating IMF Voting Power (10 mins): Teacher guides students log onto the official website for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and follow the link to the webpage where they break down the correlation between a country's voting power and national wealth in this organization. Alternatively, a teacher can print copies of this page for students if computer access is lacking. Students will, then, break into small groups to compare how much voting power the United States and United Kingdom have compared to Jamaica—evaluating if this data corroborate the evidence/outcomes from the video clips shown in the previous activity. Teacher has students share out their conclusions and divides the class into these percentages to visually demonstrate the overwhelming voting power these countries possess to set the agenda of these organizations in their favor.
- Charting International Gender Issues: Paid Parental Leave (20 mins): Students will return to their small groups tasked with applying the international economic influence that the United States possesses towards improving the economic outcomes of women. Teacher introduces the fact that the United States remains the only "developed" country in the world that does not guarantee paid parental leave to its female employees to take time off after giving birth; by framing this as another unfair economic advantage that pressures international companies competing with the U.S. to not hire female workers, students will be pushed to understand how the limits to gender equity perpetuated by the U.S. can have detrimental ripple effects around the world. Students will be given video resources and text excerpts related to this subject for their groups to develop a proposal for the IMF to compel its member countries to adopt guaranteed paid parental leave. This argument will require specific citations from the resources provided and a list of supporting evidence written out on poster paper (provided for each group). Students will be encouraged to assign roles so that they can simultaneously develop their proposals onto paper while gathering additional supporting evidence from the provided documents. Teacher circulates around the classroom throughout this activity to support struggling students and formatively assess each group's progress.
- Silent Gallery Walk Presentations (10 mins): Teacher distributes sticky notes to each group and explains that they are to walk around to each poster constructively commenting on each in complete silence by writing notes. Students will be asked to especially look out for arguments or evidence that differs from their own poster—writing about how these points further their own thinking on the subject. Student groups conclude this activity and the lesson by returning to their posters and reading through the comments left by their classmates. Teacher collects these posters for a participation/classwork grade and can hang them around the classroom if desired.
- Homework: "Planet Money" Podcast Analysis Questions: Students listen to the entirety of the "NPR Planet

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Money" podcast "Episode 842: Showdown at the WTO." After listening, students answer the following questions in complete sentences using evidence from the podcast and from class: "How can WTO along with the IMF push negative progress, override positive social decision making by developed countries? What are the implications here for combating gender wage inequality?"

Sample Lesson 3: The Gendered Labor Chain of Downward Harmonization

- Do Now Question (10 mins): "Why do billionaires like Kylie Jenner choose to produce her branded clothing in Bangladesh rather than the United States? Why do these Bangladeshi factories predominantly employ women workers?" Students take five minutes to answer these questions projected on the board in their own words as they enter the classroom. Teacher then has students share their responses with partners or out loud for another five minutes to begin introducing topics of the lesson. Note, this activity may be best accompanied with relevant news article found in the "Student Reading List" section of this unit and extended by several minutes if students have no prior knowledge of this trending online topic.

Daily Agenda (mm/dd)

- Vocabulary Introduction:
 "Downward Harmonization"
- 2. Researching Part of the Timeline
- 3. Constructing a Class Timeline
- 4. Narrating the Class Timeline
- 5. <u>Homework:</u> Weighing the Pros and Cons of "Downward Harmonization" for Women

Compelling Question:

How can the structural economic changes of industrialization both promote and hinder feminist outcomes in global societies?

- Daily Agenda (5 minutes): Sample Lesson 3
- Vocabulary Introduction "Downward Harmonization" (10 mins): Teacher distributes guided notetaking sheet(s) for students to record key vocabulary terms being introduced as the origins of this term are laid out on the board. Students will be introduced to the theoretical economic explanation of this principle—how industrialized areas will seek to export manufacturing labor to "less developed" economies due to the rising wages that accompany this development. Students will, then, be asked to infer how women will be impacted by this economic chain when their labor has been generally been valued less around the world. Teacher guides this discussion to the conclusion that women will be specifically targeted by this phenomenon due to the economic demand for the cheapest possible labor with low skill requirements to fill these manufacturing jobs.

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- Researching Part of the Timeline (20 mins): Teacher prepares for this activity by sectioning off "Chapter 6: The Long Race to the Bottom" from Pietra Rivoli's book *The Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy* into the different geographical locations it explores. After copying and printing out several copies of these sections, students divide themselves into whatever number of groups matches the amount of sections prepared by the teacher (up to 6). Teacher then assigns each group a specific geographic and temporal location covered by their section to annotate and summarize for its key information. Students will receive a guided notetaking sheet to help them identify what qualifies as key information to be applied in the following activity.
- Constructing a Class Timeline (20 mins): Teacher will gather students in the center of the classroom where a map spanning across the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans has been prepared on a large piece of poster paper. Using this map, students from each group will locate the country discussed in their assigned excerpt, cut out the boxes of key information created during the previous activity, and tape/glue these boxes in the appropriate location. After each group has successfully added their information, students' final task will be to reference all of the dates included on each country to chronologically connect them using a long piece of yarn—highlighting the path of downwards harmonization that textile industry took from Great Britain to modern-day Bangladesh. Teacher closely monitors each step of this process, correcting any misconceptions and regulating the pace in which groups contribute to the class map if necessary.
- Narrating the Class Timeline (25 mins): Student groups will stand near their country on the map constructed in the center of the classroom and provided a detailed explanation of their assigned passage. After each summary, each student group will conclude their brief presentation by elaborating on how their location's industrialization perpetuated (or began) an economic chain of "downward harmonization" as introduced at the beginning of the lesson. Each group will take their turn until the entire map has been explained in the context of the lesson. Teacher reviews each section of this class poster and presentations for a participation/classwork grade; this poster can also be displayed in the classroom following this activity if desired.
- Homework: Weighing the Pros and Cons of "Downward Harmonization" for Women: Students will be assigned to read "Chapter 12: The good news about Asian sweatshops" for Charles Wheelan's book *Naked Economics: Undressing the Dismal Science*. Based on this chapter, students will be assigned to develop a claim arguing why downward harmonization could also be beneficial for women in developing countries—using three pieces of evidence from this text to support their argument.

Summative Unit Assessment: Debating the Gains/Setbacks for Women within Globalization

While assessing students on an original unit can be difficult to quantify in a traditional test, having students conduct independent research connected to the case studies explored in class provides a meaningful measure of what students gained from these lessons. Since much of this unit relied on presenting country-specific case studies for students to understand patterns of globalization and female-empowerment, they have already had the product of my own research modelled throughout the course of this unit. By being explicit about how the content of each lesson was accumulated through this seminar process, students will have been purposefully introduced to these independent research skills in preparation for demonstrating their own understanding from this unit. For this reason, students will be assigned to choose either a "developed" or "developing" country that was not discussed throughout the unit for which they will produce a personal (or small group) case study. Students will spend the second to last class session of this unit selecting a country within these guidelines, workshopping their initial thoughts with a whole-class seminar on structuring independent research topics. During this class session, students will receive guided notetaking sheets to hold students accountable for producing a consistent quality of research on women's positionality in their selected country.

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By completing this research, students will be preparing themselves for the second part of this assessment—a class debate evaluating the effects of globalization on women's lives. My decision to pair this type of assessment with student's independent research relates back to the few structural constrains of the "International Issues" course. While a course created by compiling units from the Choices Program offers me the flexibility to fully implement this project, one structural consistency from previous years has been to assess student understanding by debating conflicting perspectives. These debates not only provide students with consistent expectations for how they will be assessed throughout this course, but also allow students to develop different skills than they gained from their more standardized Civics course in which they began the school year. For these reasons, I am compelled to conclude my unit with this same activity, having students represent female perspectives from both the "developed" and "developing" countries they chose for their independent research. By dividing the class in half between these two categories while assigning this project, this will allow students to be paired or grouped with peers who have studied a contrasting perspective. Similarly, each student will be tasked with assessing the pros and cons of globalization for women in their selected country—injecting another layer of nuance into this discussion. I plan on circulating around the classroom recording observations from these debates along with collecting a written note sheet from each student to grade this half of the assessment along with their independent research.

Classroom Resources

Selected Teacher Bibliography

Anderson, Siwan, Lori A. Beaman, and Jean-Philippe Platteau. *Towards Gender Equity in Development*. Oxford University Press, 2018.

Several relevant case studies of female positionality in developing countries; can be used to build content knowledge to support independent student research at conclusion of unit.

Goldin, Claudia. "A Grand Gender Convergence: Its Last Chapter." *The American Economic Review* 104, no. 4 (2014): 1091–1119.

Insight into the gender pay gap and how societies must address gendered temporal restraints to strive for actual gender equity in the workplace.

Gustafsson, Siv. Gender and Economics: A European Perspective. London; New York: Routledge, 1997.

Provides a direct comparison between classical economic theories and those considering a female perspective; model for synthesizing economic principles with real-life case studies considering social and political outcomes of gender equality.

Hull, Kathleen E., and Robert L. Nelson. "Assimilation, Choice, or Constraint? Testing Theories of Gender Differences in the Careers of Lawyers [*]." Social Forces 79, no. 1 (September 2000): 229.

Introduces the idea of "constrained preferences" as a nuanced perspective to the gender pay gap debate; intellectual end goal for student understanding that can be presented in the context of a globalized economy.

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Rivoli, Pietra. *Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy: An Economist Examines the Markets, Power, and Politics of World Trade*. Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2015.

Foundational introduction to globalized trade system written in accessible language following the real-world supply chain used to create T-shirts.

Stiglitz, Joseph E. Making Globalization Work. New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2007.

Comprehensive critique of neoliberal status quo of the contemporary global economy; focuses on how the field of economics along fails to consider significant social variables, such as gender inequality for the purpose of this unit.

Wheelan, Charles J. Naked Economics: Undressing the Dismal Science. New York: W. W. Norton, c2010.

Foundational introduction to macroeconomic concepts using real-world examples and accessible language.

Student Reading List and Classroom Materials

Dhaka Tribune. "Refusing to Pay Bangladesh Workers: Kylie Jenner's Brand Says 'Not Owned by GBG,'" July 4, 2020.

https://www.dhakatribune.com/showtime/2020/07/04/kendall-kylie-responds-to-accusations-of-not-paying-wor kers-in-bangladesh.

Article contextualizing "Do Now" question for Sample Lesson 3 (Optional Resource).

Economic Policy Institute. "What Is the Gender Pay Gap and Is It Real?: The Complete Guide to How Women Are Paid Less than Men and Why It Can't Be Explained Away." Accessed July 23, 2020. https://www.epi.org/publication/what-is-the-gender-pay-gap-and-is-it-real/.

Academic research broken up into sections for small group analysis in Sample Lesson 1.

Folbre, Nancy. For Love or Money: Care Provision in the United States. Russell Sage Foundation, 2012.

Book from which to pull excerpts for independent activity in Sample Lesson 2.

"IMF Members' Quotas and Voting Power, and IMF Board of Governors." Accessed July 23, 2020. https://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/memdir/members.aspx.

Online table detailing IMF voting representation for activity in Sample Lesson 2.

"Jordan Peterson Debate on the Gender Pay Gap, Campus Protests and Postmodernism - YouTube." Accessed July 23, 2020. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMcjxSThD54.

Conservative dismissal of gender pay gap for introduction of Sample Lesson 1.

NPR.org. "Episode 842: Showdown at the WTO." Accessed July 23, 2020. https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2018/05/18/612078121/episode-842-showdown-at-the-wto.

Podcast assigned as homework expanding on "neoliberalism" from Sample Lesson 2.

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POV. Life and Debt | POV | PBS. Accessed July 23, 2020. http://www.pbs.org/pov/watch/lifeanddebt/.

Documentary critiquing theoretical outcomes of IMF in practice for Sample Lesson 2.

Rivoli, Pietra. *Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy: An Economist Examines the Markets, Power, and Politics of World Trade*. Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley, 2015.

Chapter providing information for student groups to create timeline in Sample Lesson 3.

Shortall, Jessica. The US Needs Paid Family Leave--for the Sake of Its Future. TEDxSMU, 2015. https://www.ted.com/talks/jessica_shortall_the_us_needs_paid_family_leave_for_the_sake_of_its_future?language=en.

Video source for student groups to develop poster claims in Sample Lesson 2.

The Choices Program. "International Trade in a Globalized World." Accessed June 30, 2020. https://www.choices.edu/curriculum-unit/international-trade-globalized-world/.

Foundational text for understanding free trade and globalism that will be periodically assigned throughout the unit. Preparation for students to understand specific concepts introduced in each Sample Lesson.

"What People Miss about the Gender Wage Gap - YouTube." Accessed July 23, 2020. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13XU4fMIN3w.

Liberal rebuttal to dismissal of gender wage gap to conclude intro of Sample Lesson 1.

Wheelan, Charles J. Naked Economics: Undressing the Dismal Science. New York: W. W. Norton, c2010.

Homework reading assignment to give positive perspective of "downward harmonization" following critiques presented in Sample Lesson 3.

Appendix on Implementing District Standards

For as many overlapping layers of standards that must be considered while implementing New Haven's Civics curriculum, the "International Issues" course my school created as its yearlong pairing does not share these specific pedagogical constraints. As I mentioned at the start of my "Classroom Activities" section, this original unit was designed to be implemented within this "International Issues" course due to the flexibility it provided me in selecting the content and skills that I considered most beneficial for students. Staring on the local level with New Haven's K-12 Social Studies Framework, the main standards that will be addressed can be found under "Inquiry Dimension 4" of the Civics and Government section— titled "Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action." The higher-level skills within this dimension ask students to take an academic step past simply developing claims by having them evaluate their arguments against their classmates. These standards will be evaluated in a formative manner through classroom activities in preparation for the summative debate assessment at the conclusion of this unit. While starting a course by pushing students to meet more rigorous skill-based standards should be considered ill-advised without first meeting foundational

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goals, the supplementary nature of this "International Issues" course once again provided me with a unique flexibility in unit planning. My school's Civics course focuses most of its units assessing students on the earlier "Inquiry Dimensions" in New Haven's Social Studies Framework, allowing the 10th graders taking "International Issues" plenty of practice developing questions and evaluating academic sources. I, thus, hope to continue building upon the skills developed in Civics at the start of the school year by assessing students on the standards found within "Inquiry Dimension 4" at the conclusion of this unit.

As a larger consideration, each lesson plan developed within this unit will be aligned with Connecticut's Common Core Standards based on whichever "Reading," "Writing," or "Speaking & Listening" skills students demonstrate while completing different activities. Since there are no specific mandates for which of these numerous Common Core Standards will be met throughout "International Issues," their place in this unit will be more situational based on the different activities selected to prepare students for their summative assessment. While referencing Common Core provides a consistent framework for determining if my students can demonstrate a variety of general academic skills, I have found it to be a less helpful starting point for structuring an original unit. Instead, I have found more success in considering my content goals and unit assessment while creating the sample lessons included in this project before picking out the Common Core standards represented in these activities. Although this approach goes against my "backwards design" planning philosophy, I have found my diverse lesson activities to inadvertently represent a variety of these standards through. By prioritizing "Inquiry Dimension 4" from New Haven's Social Studies Standards throughout this unit, however, "Speaking & Listening" Standards should be more represented in preparing students for their summative debate assessment.

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