Schooling the World: Exploring the critical course on sustainable development through an anthropological lens

Abstract

This article reflects on formal education for sustainable development (ESD), demonstrating how a critical course on culturally diverse ways of relating to nature can contribute both to an appreciation of alternative ways of relating to nature and to a more nuanced understanding of one's own cultural and ideological positioning. This article will focus on the analysis of student reactions to the film Schooling the World, shown to students as part of this critical course. The film stimulated the discussion of the effects of Western-style education on indigenous communities. In their evaluation, the students have demonstrated their critical ability to look beyond their own neoliberal education and cosmopolitan culture. The course described in this article can serve as a blueprint for educational initiatives that combine both ethnographic insights and critical scholarship addressing environmental education and ESD.

Keywords: anthropology; education for sustainable development (ESD); environmental education; indigenous knowledge

Introduction

Most studies reported in Environmental Education Research (EER), The Journal of Environmental Education (JEE), Canadian Journal of Environmental Education (CJEE), as well as Journal of Education for Sustainable Development (JESD) and International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education (IJSHE) explore education in formal settings and rarely address informal, traditional or indigenous learning.

The early literature on indigenous environmental education used to focus on how to get indigenous people to acquire the wisdom of the Western scientific view of the world (Darnell 1972; Orvik and Barnhardt 1974). Post-colonial educational initiatives, such as missionary schools or learning facilities established by development agencies, tended to present traditional cultural learning as irrelevant for the modern world and even backward (Sarangapani 2003; Norberg-Hodge 2009). Rare studies have focused on recognition of traditional ways of knowing as constituting knowledge systems in their own right, with

environmental learning occurring without formal regulations or standardized curriculum (Norberg-Hodge 1996; Barnhardt and Kawagley 2005). Instead, students were often learning nature facts actually distancing them from the emotional experience of nature known in traditional societies (Milton 2002; Anderson 2012). As opposed to more traditional forms of learning about environment, modern industrial societies and learning takes a short-term, narrow view of resource management and ethical conduct instead of a long-term, global view of "Ecotopia"—a conception in which the destructive corollaries of consumerism are curbed by emotionally grounded policies and ethics of sustainability, social justice, and stewardship (Anderson 2010). In a similar vein, many anthropologists have argued that the idea of 'progress' embedded in mainstream discussion of sustainable development, is relative to the culture that produces it and that the enterprise of development actually creates social inequalities and imbalance between humans and environment (Lewis 2005).

Additionally, students of Western-style education for sustainable development (ESD) are often exposed to the essentially instrumental and anthropocentric view of nature as a 'natural resources' or 'ecosystem service' (Kopnina 2012b). In the words of Michael Bonnett (2013:195), in the age of metaphysics of mastery, it is the 'scientism' that 'increasingly allowed to presume a fundamentality in terms both of setting up environmental issues and of structuring the environment of education'.

Until recently there was little literature that addressed how to get Western educators and students to appreciate the alternative cross-cultural worldviews in relation to nature (Noblit 2013). Neither is there extensive literature on how education helps students approach environmental sustainability through a deeper understanding of cultural and biological diversity (Shao-Chang Wee 2013).

This article attempts to fill this gap reflecting on the case study is based on classroom ethnography (Watson- Gegeo 1997) of the critical course for the Bachelor's students of the International Business Management Studies (IBMS) at The Hague University in The Netherlands for twelve weeks during September and December 2012. This critical course involved viewing the documentary film *Schooling the World* by Carol Black (2010), which was used as one of the many exercises in self-reflection for a group of international business students who followed sustainable business minor.

The film presents the case of the development of agency-sponsored Western-style school in a remote village in Ladakh, a small country in the northern Indian Himalayas. The question posed in the film is: If you wanted to change an ancient culture in a generation, how would

you do it? According to the filmmakers, the answer to this question is 'You would change the way it educates its children'. The film commentators are, anthropologist and ethnobotanist Wade Davis, a National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence; Helena Norberg-Hodge and Vandana Shiva, both recipients of the Right Livelihood Award for their work with traditional peoples in India; and Manish Jain, a former architect of education programs with UNESCO, USAID, and the World Bank. The film presents Western education and the rhetoric of (sustainable) development as a form of neo-colonialism, in which students are increasingly indoctrinated in neoliberal ideology. Commentators in the film suggested that indigenous learning may provide an alternative in viewing communities and nature as truly sustainable. This film was used to trigger in-class discussions, linking the aim of making alternative visions of culturally variable relationship to nature comprehensible to international students of (sustainable) business.

In the following sections, we shall briefly discuss formal and informal education and reflect on how anthropologists can contribute to the research in these areas. We shall then turn to the in-class discussions and written assignments to reflect upon the critical course, and particularly the film Schooling the World.

Schooling the World: Educating for sustainable development

The United Nations declared 2005 to 2015 to be 'the Decade on Education for Sustainable Development' (UNESCO 2009). Cepek (2011) argues that not governments but communally and culturally significant practices mark the success of environmental learning and questions the concept of "*environmentality*" - the idea that environmentalist programs and movements operate as forms of *governmentality* in Michel Foucault's sense.

Some educational researchers have highlighted that the concept of sustainable development neglects traditional forms of *environmentality* and reduces our relationships with nature to the instrumental use of it. ESD tends to focus on social and economic aspects of sustainability, emphasizing absolute poverty reduction, social equality, and other aspects of social justice that tend to relate to the environment in strictly instrumental terms, as a natural resource that would enable transformation toward a more just society. For example, Adams (in Blewitt and Tilbury 2013:134) identified seven global frames where education needs to be a meaningful ingredient: ending poverty, equity and inclusion, economic growth and jobs, getting to zero, global minimum entitlements, sustainable development, and wellbeing and quality of life. Education for conservation and sustainable development often mentions the same aspects, without explicit mention of biodiversity conservation (Blewitt and Tilbury 2013). In this

context, sustainability simply becomes a matter of human welfare in preserving human resources for future generations of humans (Kronlid and Öhman 2013), a manifestation of 'metaphysics of mastery' (Bonnett 2013). The normalization of the idea of natural resources embedded in the concept of sustainable development, according to its critics, negates traditional values that saw humans be part of nature and perpetuates the idea of human superiority.

According to Crist (2012), the foundational belief of supremacy includes interlocked conceptual and action-orientation dimensions, manifests most clearly in the attitude of the total entitlement that can hardly be challenged because it claims both consensual power <u>and</u> morality on its side. In this paradigm, the paradoxes of sustainable development are rarely discussed.

> While "raising the standard of living" may be nebulous shorthand for the worthy aim of ending severe deprivation, translated into shared understanding and policy the expression is a euphemism for the global dissemination of consumer culture-the unrivaled model of what a "high standard of living" looks like. But to feed a growing population <u>and</u> enter increasing numbers of people into the consumer class is a formula for completing the Earth's overhaul into a planet of resources… (Crist 2012: 143).

In his article on the role of nature in ESD, Michael Bonnett (2007: 720) has argued that ideally, environmental education should be essentially concerned with an understanding and appreciation of the environment and the significance of the natural order, including our place in it. At the heart of this will be an attempt to characterize, and develop in life, what should count as a right relationship with nature and thus a fuller understanding of what truly should count as human flourishing.

A critical pedagogy of Paul Freire is particularly relevant to this critique, noting that "the 'banking' concept of education," in which knowledge is deposited in student receptacles, regards people as "adaptable, manageable beings. The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them the less they develop [a] critical consciousness" (Freire 1970:22). As Ira Shor has put it: "All forms of education are political because they can enable or inhibit the questioning habits of students, thus developing or disabling their critical relation to knowledge, schooling, and society" (Shor 1992: 12-13). This leads us to the question of alternatives in the way 'environment' can be perceived in cross-cultural contexts, through the discipline that made culture study its own, anthropology.

The relationship between anthropology and critical pedagogy was explored in the works on culture and education published by anthropologist Jules Henry, during the 1960s. Henry's *Culture Against Man* (1963) questioned the authority of, and rationale behind, cultural institutions, particularly public education. "In order not to fail," Henry once observed, "most students are willing to believe anything and [not to care] whether what they are told is true or false." (1963:26). The learning objective thus becomes the pleasing of authority, not developing convictions and stand up for them. Additionally, students are vulnerable to the way this authority presents reality – in increasingly hegemonic terms (Henry 1966). Anthropologists since Henry have continued this line of critical inquiry, noting that fact formal (Western) education may be complacent in a conspiracy of development agencies (Escobar 1995) in which native ways of relating to each other as well as to plants and animals is undermined (Ferguson 1994). Vandana Shiva (1993) reflected that Western education creates monocultures of the mind and perpetuates the capitalist ideal of development in which nature is seen as subservient to human economic needs. While instrumental use of nature as a natural resource is a hallmark of ESD, the ethical and spiritual frameworks of indigenous societies have long created ways of life that are both satisfying and in balance with the natural world (Davis 2009).

Formal education is increasingly dependent on corporate funding leading to serious concern amongst environmental educators in the developed countries about the influence of neoliberalism on curriculum (Jickling & Wals 2008) when corporatized higher education being charged to produce obedient neoliberal subjects (Blewitt 2013:58). The film Schooling the World (Black 2010) also shows that education in developing countries is heavily sponsored by development agencies. Norberg-Hodge, reflects: 'There is an assumption that western education, western knowledge, is something that is superior… there is an idea that we have evolved to a higher level of being, and that these people, however lovely they are, they're going to benefit from this superior knowledge' (Norberg-Hodge quoted in Black 2010). In reality, the film demonstrates, in the system dominated by Western capital, formal education can be seen as a mechanism of creating the belief that getting the right skills, getting the job and getting money is all that a human being can aspire to. The embedded sustainability of traditional practices becomes submerged under the study of facts about the environment.

Environmental education: anthropological perspectives

Anthropological work on indigenous learning is rich in representations of local perceptions of the environment and the human place in it. Informal education refers to beyond-the-classroom experiences and belief systems and local or indigenous knowledge regarding conceptions of humans in their environment (Efird 2011).

These value acquisitions occur through what Appadurai (1996) terms "*ideoscapes*", which people create through the perception of the environment, ideology, and learning. These *ideoscapes* are often directly political and frequently have to do with the ideologies of states and the counter-ideologies of movements explicitly oriented to capturing state power (Appadurai 1996:36). Understanding the power of these *ideoscapes* and the power inherent in environmental politics is of vital importance if environmental damage is to be addressed on a global scale.

Anderson (2010 and 2012) compares formal education in science, natural history, and the environment to that in traditional societies. In traditional societies, stories were usually either myths or highly circumstantial personal memoirs told by elders and mentors. In traditional communities social and particularly intergenerational aspects of learning play a significant part in knowledge transfer.

In examining multiple levels of meaning that inform Native astronomy and cosmology, Gregory Cajete (1994 and 2000) reflects that unlike the western scientific method, native thinking does not isolate an object or phenomenon in order to understand it, but perceives it as a relational, interdependent phenomenon. While it cannot be asserted that native peoples possess an inherently more ecocentric worldview, the idea of humans as part of nature, as interrelated and not external to it, is paramount to the indigenous perception of human-nature relationships (Sponsel 2011). In this view, the understanding of the relationships that bind together natural forces and all forms of life has been fundamental to the ability of indigenous peoples to live in spiritual and physical harmony with the land, passed on through generations (Anderson 2012). As Veronica Strang (2013:5), a prominent anthropologist has noted in case of Aboriginal people's relationship with their 'game':

> Although they may define things in terms of wild ('cheeky') and tame, they do not impose a conceptual division between nature and culture. Most critically, they see the non-human as sentient collaborative partners in relation to human communities and valorize the necessity of ensuring the long-term well-being of all participants in this partnership. Thus Australian Aboriginal engagements with the material world emphasize techniques for ensuring the continued reproduction of all of its inhabitants…. Their voices resonate with those of western scholars calling for a

conceptual and moral reintegration of nature and culture, and a more sustainable bioethical relationship between human and non-human beings.

This non-dichotomous perception of nature has important implications for studies of environmental knowledge change. Tim Ingold argues that knowledge is not simply passed on ready-made, but undergoes continual regeneration through guided rediscovery within social contexts of interaction between instructors and novices (Ingold 2007:16). Intergenerational learning includes passing on stories and legends from old to young, stories that embody existential questions and is often enhanced by emotionally powerful rituals and ceremonies connected to the lived experience in nature (Nabhan 1997; Barnhardt and Kawagley 2005; Zarger 2010). In this context, the anthropological methodology may be better suited to capture the complexity and nuance of the culturally mediated process of environmental learning. In the words of Efird (2011:263), the intimate perspective of participant-observation and extended, in-depth interviewing often capture the subtle dynamics and nuanced content of local relationships with the non-human world that can elude surveys and statistical analysis. These small but consequential details are also the very things that are liable to be lost in the welter and flux of a fast-paced, information-rich society. Against tendencies towards both centralization and rootlessness in contemporary life, anthropology is thus well-placed to help us learn the land beneath our feet, and care for it.

These cultural and universal variations in the human relationship with nature in anthropology may be complementary to interdisciplinary research conducted by ecological sociologists, environmental political scientists, conservation psychologists and others who formed theories about the influence of the social contexts in which worldviews are formed. Applying this insight, we shall inquire how do students of a sustainable business minor, which the author of this article teaches at the IBMS relate to nature and which metaphors do they use to describe it before and after the educational intervention that problematizes certain aspects of neoliberal discourse.

Methodology

Methodologically, the present case study involved interaction between participant observation of the lecture (researcher), targeting multifaceted areas of knowledge, attitudes, values, and behavior in relation to students' perception of human-environment relationship. The methodology of classroom ethnography involves engagement with those who are being studied so that ethnographic researcher was able to enter the world of his 'subjects' (Carspecken and Walford 2001). While the scope of this article does not allow us detailed

investigation of all qualitative data, including observation of student behavior, the general aim of this investigation was to examine how the critical course on culturally diverse ways of relating to nature can contribute both to an appreciation of culturally specific ways of relating to nature and a more nuanced understanding of one's own cultural and ideological positioning. The students participated in the evaluation of the course, as they were asked to reflect upon what they think they have learned.

This case study involved the sample of twenty-one international students of higher education in the age category between 20 and 24 years old. Most students were European (8 Dutch, 3 French, 2 German, 1 Spanish), followed by Asian (2 Chinese, 1 Taiwanese), 2 South American, and 2 North American (one of the African American). The students were asked to participate in this study at the beginning of the twelve-week course titled Politics, Business, Environment (PB&E) given as one of the modules of the minor Sustainable Business. The conversations with students were held throughout the course between September 2012 and December 2012. PB&E was focused on environmental politics, the question of corporate self-regulation and neoliberalism, as well as ways of conceiving environment, both through examining documents such as United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) and alternative conceptions. Included lectures and materials summarized in the course documents found on http://thehagueuniversity.academia.edu/author/Teaching-Documents (anonymous author) as well as some of the literature used for writing this article. Additionally, students were shown the documentary film Schooling the World (Black 2010).

At the beginning of the course, the students were asked to reflect upon the questions related to (sustainable) development and environment. The author of the article and the lecturer of this course attempted to stimulate students to develop a discussion among themselves on the basis of these questions, rather than provide any answers. After the twelve-week PB&E course, the students were again asked to reflect on the same questions. These reflections were conducted in the form of in-class discussions, written assignments, as well as observations of student behavior. The film *Schooling the World* served both as a catalyst and qualitative measuring device for assessing the students' appreciation of the complexity and inherent paradoxes of sustainable development. Results of both initial and consequent discussions are summarized below.

Results at the beginning of the course

When asked about the term 'development' the students reflected that the term is associated with 'growth', 'progress', 'modernity' and 'ways forward', as well as 'evolution' in a more biological context. When asked to reflect upon the term 'economic development' few students have shown

awareness of the agency – rather they discussed development as 'helping people to overcome poverty'. Students did name a few ways in which economic development can be achieved – through 'building roads', improving 'travel', 'helping to develop…. efficient agriculture', 'building hospitals', and introducing education or 'building schools'. Sustainable development was seen as an effort to 'help' others to reach the same stage of 'progress' and 'growth' as 'developed' countries were seen to have.

Researcher's observations of student behavior have shown that students felt socially at ease discussing sustainable development with each other. Students seemed confident that sustainable development will lead to good future prospects both for themselves and developing countries' students. When asked: How do you think development relates to culture? The students felt more puzzled, supposing that the idea of 'cultural development' is somehow related to sustainable development, but also expressing doubt about what was meant by culture, and whether 'Western culture' could be indeed seen as something that could be related to sustainable development.

In response to question: 'How do you think development relates to nature?', the students felt that there was no direct link, except for 'natural resources', although two students have pointed out that sustainable development aims to 'protect nature', or 'ensure that it is preserved for future generations'. One student has pointed out that perhaps development may 'hurt nature', as development presupposed 'many things have to be built… where natural areas once were'. This contribution has not received much of other students' notice though.

In response to questions: What aims do you think education for sustainable development serves? What aims does your own education (at IBMS, but also for this course) serve? students started an animated discussion, singling out the fact that education is closely related to the objectives of development. Particularly the contribution of the enterprise of sustainable development to the development of schools and education was seen as indisputably the 'good thing', and objectives of education were not questioned. Some students were already aware of the Brundtland report definition and thought that sustainable development interpreting its aim as a combination of social and environmental objectives as well as implying that by 'future generations' only human beings (and not other species) are included.

The students readily evoked the triple bottom line and the objectives of achieving both economic prosperity and equality and ecological protection. Furthermore, these students saw the combination of ecological and human interests as logical and the focus on future human generations as morally normative. They saw their own position – as mostly Western students –

as more privileged than that of young people in developing countries, who, to use the expression of a Dutch female students 'do not get the same opportunities as we do'.

Students' attitudes to education have indicated that they see their own education and that in developing countries as leading to factors they have characterized as a success. Some students used qualifying terms like 'opportunities', 'knowledge', 'competencies', and 'future perspectives' to qualify what success in education in general and in education for sustainable development meant.

After the course

Students' identification of nature and biodiversity has not changed much since the initial discussion. The students' perception of biodiversity remained contextually related to their (or generally, human) perception of it, but moral and ethical aspects of the human relationship with nature (such as 'taking responsibility') were evoked. Emotional attachment to nature was also emphasized as one of the reasons why should 'humans protect nature'. The students also felt that there were some essential problems in combining social, economic and ecological objectives.

The terms the students have used were much less optimistic than during the first weeks of their course, accentuating difficulties, paradoxes and challenges, as well as indicating the need not to just 'solve' the problems by engaging in the 'right' kind of sustainable business, but also the need to understand, debate and re-evaluate fundamental terms underlying sustainability. Instead of metaphors of unity, progress and challenges, metaphors emphasizing doubt, contestation, and ethics have been used. As one Chinese female student reflected at the end of the course:

First, I thought I knew how to help solve environmental problems by doing the right thing… I started to wonder what the right thing is… How can nature be allowed to blossom if we all want a piece of it? How can we make things that would not upset the balance [of nature or of humans and nature]? I'm afraid I am left with more questions than when I have started [this course]. Maybe it's a good thing…

The film Schooling the World has left a deep impression. Below is the selection of (excerpts) out of a selection of written reactions.

American female student:

This film introduced an entirely new way of thinking I had never realized before. I have been brought up in the mindset that building schools in small villages and sending teachers to them was good for humanity, society, and the economy. This film educated me that there is much more to it than that.

First of all, the history even in America of forcing Native American children through school systems was truly a way to brainwash them and remove as much of their connections to the culture, family and entire lifestyle. Giving them new names and requiring habits to become uniform in what is 'acceptable' for society was very blatantly forcing a group of people to leave their old way of life behind without choice- assuming that this would be the best future for everyone. From this perspective, I have always known this is wrong. The way Native Americans lived was obviously sustainable and rich in their own way. They knew how to live from what they had and address conflicts in a way that made sense for them. It was the beginning of globalization that made their lifestyle an issue. Now that different cultures were interacting, the two ways of life had differences that could not coexist. In the end, one would overcome and either Native Americans would lose their ways little by little as white men became more powerful, or the conquerors could take one strong action to eliminate long conflict by raising the newest generation to convert to one way of thought and action.

In comparison, in places like Asia where villages are losing the youth population, there is a consciousness of the decision where children and parents alike believe this is the best or perhaps the only option for a 'better' future. Again it seems the globalization of western culture is creating a place where traditional ways of doing things just cannot compete and coexist with newer faster and stronger machines or technologies. Even if children wished to stay in a village to work in fields, the fields will no longer provide enough to live on. And so children are moving to cities to try to 'compete' with people all over the world when they are likely only becoming equal with other individuals trying to climb the social or economic ladder. Examples from the film showed individuals becoming semi-literate in a world where they don't belong. In this way, basic reading and writing do not help a person who was raised to live off the land and finds themselves in a land of concrete and waste.

Another striking dichotomy was in the types of 'remote villages' were many the pure-hearted individual visits to find children without structured school lessons and all people living in a harmonious and sustainable lifestyle. Outsiders see the peace and nature in this lifestyle and envy it. They may study it or become immersed to find themselves changed in a way that reflects the wisdom in traditional ways. Without technologies and competition to always win there is a better way of life. We see that and we love it, and we try to change it. If this culture has survived and thrived without a 'formal education' why would it need one? It just does, right? Surely if children know how to read or write, add and subtract, their peaceful lives can be even better through economic growth and development. But why do they need this? Maybe they don't.

Any culture with traditional practices to guide lifestyle cannot be maintained if programs for education contradict some of those traditional practices. As with the Native American example, on way must bow to the other, either over time or in a great defeat.

Dutch male student:

The basic thought about the movie is that if you want to change a culture you will have to start with the children. Schools are built by volunteers witch believe that this is the only way to a 'better' life for the children is different parts of the world.

The movie starts with an old lady who tells that she was happier without the schools because now that everybody has education the children are leaving.

In many cultures, the traditional way of teaching was more focused on the spiritual successes where the 'new' way of teaching is more focussed on material success. This way we destroy the traditions and cultures and creating a new world with the same culture everywhere. When the schools first started the children were forced to come to the schools.

If we take a look at the countries now we see that everything is focused around money and materialism. If you look at the old way of education we see that the children learned more about sustainability in their own environment. Looking at the new way of teaching we see that the children are learning more about products and lose the knowledge to survive in their own country.

Basically, general education will mold everybody into the same thinking patterns and make the people depended on their knowledge of gain from the new education. People who are in favor of the new education say that the people in the so-called 3rd world counties don't want their children to live how they live. But on the other hand children in the Western world are more depressed and try to live up to a certain standard. We see that poverty is created by the western world. If you see the traditional way of living there is no poverty. If students return to their villages they haven't learned how to live there and are not accepted in the western world so they fall in between two cultures.

Some teacher thinks they did a really good job by teaching the children and still stand behind the decision to educate them because they really want to help the people in these countries. Only they don't see what impact the 'new' teaching has on the current traditional values. The people are now living off the land are afraid that the land going to be away because the students are not educated to work on the land. So it raised the questions what is knowledge?, What is poverty? What is wealth?

I think that it is important that people are educated but on the other hand, it is really important that everybody has to keep their culture. I know this will be really difficult because the largest corporation is growing and countries not adopting the new systems are left behind by those corporations and the threat of ending up as a poor country is a big risk. On the other hand, it is

shown that poverty in countries has grown since the new way of education had started. Students are not able to work in the countryside anymore and are not hired by the big corporations.

I think that we should give people our knowledge but not force them to adopt our culture and values. We should always keep in mind that people have to keep their own cultures, languages and traditional values. These values are also important for seeing nature not as an object but as something of great value.

French female student:

This movie was talking about; as the title suggests; what is considered as the white man's « last burden ». It evokes the fact that during history, the so-called « white man » or developed people have always tried to take control of the people they considered as « less developed people ». Starting from that point, people living a different way of life than what they were used to do, can only be less developed people, in the need for an evolution whereas, in fact, those people were living the life they wanted to according to their traditions and costumes. The best example is the colonialism that occurred in the 19th century in most of the European states based on the imperialism.

If in the developed countries, going to school, learn and develop skills from a teacher is the natural way to grow up and to evolve in life, it is not necessary the same in others countries following different traditions...

Children had to go to school and when they were not living in a city with a school, the children had to leave their parents. Actually, in the movie, they say that children were «taken from their parents» An old woman, representative of the indigenous culture says that since that moment, compassion, kindness, and helping; which were mainly part of their tradition; are gone. People are now starting more and more to focus on the profits, and how are they going to be a doctor or an engineer and to make lots of money.

Capitalism implemented in an old civilization who was not used to it and need not it. It is said in the movie that ancient culture, such as this one, is an ecosystem with a network, and when an ecosystem changes it might have unpredictable effects.

All of this, leads us to ask: « Where has the development taken people to?» and if we, developed countries, should really be able to command other countries or cities living a different way of life than we do just because they do not have the same power to defend themselves and explain why their life is good as it is, without the globalization effects.

I found this movie really moving, and it makes me reflect on whether the globalization is or not a good evolution.

While globalization offered a lot to the entire world, in some situation such as this one, it is only destroying an entire culture that can be considerate as a real ecosystem that we should on the contrary protect.

Chinese male student:

What I found interesting in this film is that native peoples knew how to be sustainable. They respected nature and did not exploit it. They did not use nature to make wealth but lived in harmony with it….

Personally, I think it's ok to teach students about things we know of here, but it's not ok to teach them how to lose their own culture and how to lose their own connection with nature. It is good that our own course is used to make us think about such questions.

Dutch male student:

I personally don't really have an opinion on it either way. Unless these people are forcefully being indoctrinated against their will, there aren't really any human rights being violated. In the end, all people are facing the same kind of propaganda and indoctrination of the culture and system they're living in. It's inevitable, and there is no objective frame of reference to say when it is wrong or right. It's the nature of the beast, like an ant colony that adheres to the same structure from generation to generation, just because they're ants, and that's what they do. Do people who support capitalism genuinely think it's the best ideology out there because of its merits, or because they have grown up in an environment that has always told them it was? Similarly, do indigenous people believe in their customs, their gods, and their way of life because of its merits, or because that's what they've been taught since birth? And when different ideologies collide, some people might decide to switch. Not because they have rationally considered its merits, but because of what they're told by whoever has the influence to do so. This too goes for indigenous people who trade in their little houses made of mud and living off the land, for a small cruddy apartment and a 9/5 job. As long as they're not being forced, they're just being influenced, and then it comes down to their own judgment, thus their own decision to say "I'm going to preserve my heritage" or "I'm going to pursue the western ideal".

So to me, the whole point this movie is trying to make is also what discredits it. According to their view, the western world tries to indoctrinate these people with propaganda and discredits their heritage. But at the same time, these people's heritage is a system of indoctrination and propaganda that programs people to think and act a certain way. That's just an inherent flaw of all societies and cultures. The only variable is the individual, who is responsible for his own

decisions and actions. If they didn't want to leave their village and customs behind, they didn't have to. But they did, and so the consequences are theirs to live with.

Reflection on the case study

In this case study, the initial observations show that students perceive 'nature' in mostly instrumental terms reflecting on dominant Western perception which both equates ecological and socio-economic interests and sees ecological interests as largely subservient to social and economic ones. The dominance of neoliberal approach to nature is manifested through normative metaphors of 'natural resources', 'ecosystem services' and 'natural capital'.

In their discussion of the film, the students have demonstrated a heightened awareness of Western ideology and cultural bias in uncalculating the formal knowledge, as well as neo-colonial tendencies of development-agencies sponsored education programs in developing areas. Students written responses demonstrated that education can be – perhaps ironically considering that educational intervention was hereby used as a tool to prompt students to think critically about educational practice – indeed quite powerful in changing one's perceptions of what is 'good', and just, and moral and desirable.

Anthropological contribution to the knowledge about humans' perception of the environment through the exploration of the role of cultural variation as well as acknowledgment of apparently universal emotions could be very useful to these interdisciplinary studies. Theoretically, anthropology could contribute to linking critical pedagogical approaches to culturally specific examples derived from ethnographies of indigenous learning practices. The potential area of anthropological contribution to environmental education also lies in providing anthropology's own unique cultural expertise to answer one of the most significant questions about education in general and environmental education in particular – does it actually work?

This case study also leads us to consider the question of the aim and instrumentality of all education. While all education can be considered to be a form of indoctrination (for debates, see Jickling 2009; Jickling & Spork 1998; Fien 2000; Kopnina 2012a, 2012b), in the case of ESD, one of the central areas of inculcation is sustainable development itself (Gough & Scott 2007; Wals 2007; Læssøe & Öhman 2010). As one of the students has perceptively argued, Schooling the World film can also be seen as a form of indoctrination – but then of the opposite of neoliberalism. Similarly, Blewitt has noted, that ironically, 'many of the authors, editors, and publishers work within the educational system they attack and wish to see reformed or

overturned. This shows there is still enough space for dissenting academics to be progenitors of alternatives if they are courageous enough to act' (2013:62). The same can be said about the most highly educated anthropologists and Indian activists in the film, who, despite their Western education, were able to develop their critical views. As one of the students said: everybody's culture can be also seen as a system of indoctrination. This critical ability to see a mirror inside the mirror is evidence of students´ critical ability, offers hope that teaching a critical course to business students is indeed going to help to reach beyond the docile neoliberal mold. In the words of Davis (2009), exploration of indigenous learning leads to rediscovering a new appreciation for the diversity of the human spirit, as expressed by culture. Such rediscovery can benefit Western students, and particularly students of business, as well.

In the introduction to this article, we have noted that environmental education theorists have argued that all education is basically the inculcation of certain values and that the ethical question is when it is appropriate to inculcate such values and when it is not. Anthropological research can inform us in this regard, both in terms of providing students with an understanding of their own culturally biased position, and appreciation of non-Western perceptions, attitudes and values that do not easily fit within the conventional sustainable development approach. As the case study reported in this article has demonstrated, Western students can be taught to be critical of their own education, as well as educational practices in developing countries, reflecting, in the words of one of the students that 'we should give the people our knowledge but not force them to adopt our culture and values…. These values are also important for seeing nature not as an object but as something of great value.'

Conclusion.

In this article, the author has called for on the one hand, to anthropologists to engage with environmental education and education for sustainable development, and on the other, to environmental educators to learn from ethnographic studies of informal environmental education. In line with Cepek (2011)'s idea of *environonmentality*, deeper engagement with alternative categories and worldviews can allow students and instructors to consider the role of critical cognition as well as emotion in motivating environmental care and recognition of other cultures. While the limitation of this study is the inability to fit full analysis of rich qualitative data into the scope of the discussion of this article, his case study could be used for consequent research into how culturally relative values could be presented in formal educational settings.

Anthropological gaze, characterized by the critical, self-reflective, often relativistic and culturally sensitive attitude to the subject such as 'sustainable development' could provide a

nuanced perspective on ESD as well as shed light on how corporate, national, or institutional agendas interact with environmental education at the grass-roots level. The role of environmental education is of paramount importance if we are to understand the complexity of culturally specific understandings and different communities' paths towards a positive resolution of the human relationship with the environment. As exemplified by the film Schooling the World, indigenous learning of environment is much broader than neoliberal-oriented education for sustainable development. Anthropologists could provide detailed accounts of national or local settings to enrich the study of complexity in the process of environmental learning.

The case study has demonstrated the potential for international business students to become critically aware of the paradoxes of sustainable development and conceptions of nature. This case study can serve as a blueprint for consequent educational initiatives that would combine both ethnographic insights and critical scholarship addressing sustainable development and alternative perspectives environment.

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