

# Walden University

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2005

ABSTRACT

Themes and Images that Transcend Cultural Differences in International Classrooms

by

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M.A., Jones International University, 2000

B.A., University of Oregon, 1986

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Education

Walden University  
December 2005

## ABSTRACT

Educators of international students are frequently challenged to cope with a clashing diversity of cultures in a classroom setting. This study examined what sorts of themes and images might resonate across nationalities and cultures, which could then be used as tools to aid an instructional framework for international education. The study employed mixed qualitative and quantitative methods to identify and analyze transculturally (culturally transcendent) resonant images and themes. International students viewed and rated a series of video clips presented in the context of global business courses. The study findings indicate applied themes and images including babies, animals, relationships, sports, life cycles, and self-image may help evoke a positive transcultural resonance. The findings were used to consider instructional applications for more effective learning in international classroom settings. These findings may also provide a foundation for international educator training, as well as enhanced accessibility to global education significant to inclusive social change.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### Introduction

Educators of international students are frequently challenged to cope with a clashing diversity of cultures in a classroom setting. Likewise, international students entering a new culture may face alien circumstances “tantamount to knowing the words without knowing the music, or knowing the music without knowing the dance” (Adler, 2001, p. 99). The research question at hand is: What sorts of themes and images might resonate across nationalities and cultures, which could be used to construct an instructional framework to ease the way for international students and educators? To that end, this study examined international university students’ reactions to various themes and images projected through video presentations, within international business courses. Data were collected through a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods including observation, interviews, and a measurement instrument, with sufficient safeguards to ensure study reliability and validity. Following the data collection, the study sought to identify and categorize any transcultural images and themes that may resonate across diverse national and cultural backgrounds, within a theoretical framework that may be applicable to enhanced learning in international classrooms.

The rapidly changing dynamic of education’s form and function is requiring new structures and new skills in the administration and delivery of international higher education in particular (American Council on Education [ACE], 2002). Education is often hailed as a means for addressing and redressing many of the world’s woes. As

global economic developments may allow for advancements in educational inclusion, there exists an opportunity for higher education institutions around the world to meet the demand of and competition for international students (Altbach, 2004a). This is an issue of particular importance to colleges and universities in the United States enjoying the financial contributions of international students to educational coffers as well as the greater economy (Rooney, 2003), as many U.S.-based traditional and online academic institutions are expanding their reach into the highly competitive global education arena (Pohl, 2003). To be successful in this outreach, institutions and instructors must be prepared to effectively deal with the demands of an international setting, where “the educational benefits of including international perspectives and traditions” are imperative (Rooney, 2003, p. 1).

Though the United States has seen a recent drop in the net numbers of international students attending American universities and colleges, a total of more than 720,000 international students for the academic year 2003/2004 still places the United States as a top choice for students studying outside of their home country, contributing some \$13 billion annually to the U.S. economy (Institute of International Education [IIE], 2004). One of the common shortcomings of U.S.-based international education is that American instructors may often be unprepared for and unaccommodating of the diverse cultural variations and needs found among international students (e.g., Pinheiro, 2001). Though instructors cannot be expected to become experts on the diversity of world cultures, they can become better skilled at finding methods to adapt to the challenge in a way that—while acknowledging cultural variations—seeks to transcend them.

Consideration of cultural influences in the globalizing environment of higher education, as well as the introduction of new communication technologies and their impact on the internationalization of classroom cultures, is further explored in the chapter 2 literature review.

The study's conclusion (chapter 5) considers transcultural models to conduct more effective learning experiences in international higher educational settings. If such tactics are further developed, international students could benefit in a number of ways, including an increased comfort level in a strange environment; improved bonding between students as they relate to each other on individual common ground; enhanced integration within the class by finding common group ground; improved course relevancy by seeking transcultural context for the materials; and improved application of resonant themes and images to better engage students' attention in the learning process. Finally, the study findings may be applied to instructional methods and curricula development administrators and educators might consider to improve learning opportunities for international students, and to be better prepared for the increasingly competitive globalized environment of higher education.

### Problem Statement

The problem this study addressed is that teachers in international courses are frequently not able to accommodate the wide range of cultural variations among a growing diversity of international students (Adam, 2003; Pinheiro, 2001). The failure of American universities to fully address international students' needs "has become cause

for dissatisfaction and has impacted the academic experience of many international students” (Pineiro, 2001, p. 3). This shortcoming may be addressed in part by seeking out methods for educators to improve their interactions with international students whether in traditional or online classrooms, so they might better “navigate the difficult terrain of cultural complexity” (Engberg & Green, 2002, p. 7).

### Nature of the Study

This study employed mixed qualitative grounded theory and quantitative methods to identify and analyze potential transculturally (culturally transcendent) resonant images and themes. The study findings were then used to consider transcultural models toward more effective learning in international classroom settings. The foundations of the study employed a qualitative grounded theory approach, seeking a theoretical context for researcher observations over 4 years teaching diverse groups of international students. For the quantitative element, a simple survey instrument was applied to provide a measure of participant reactions to the presented themes and images within courses comprised of international students. The themes and images examined in the study were gleaned from international marketing video clips played in PowerPoint presentations during global marketing and advertising courses for international students, with student reactions measured through observation, informal interviews, and student assignments.

### Study Questions

The primary research question in the study was what sorts of themes and images might create a positive transcultural resonance within an international classroom

comprised of diverse nationalities and cultural backgrounds? A secondary question that followed the research was how might such culturally transcendent themes and images be applied to course design, both in traditional and online international settings? The latter question is addressed in chapter 5 on conclusions and applications of findings. Key methodology questions are further addressed in chapter 3, including: How valid is the study sample? How suitable was the study environment for reliable data gathering? How qualified was the researcher to conduct this study? How are the potentially transcultural themes and images evidenced in an international classroom?

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine circumstances that may better empower international educators through the application of resonant themes and images in the classroom, to help improve common ground and positive interactions among students of diverse nationalities and cultures. Furthermore, the findings of the study may be useful in presentations to help prepare instructors to better meet the challenges and needs to be found in instructing international students.

### Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

As detailed below, the framework governing the current study was based on a set of fundamental concepts and theories. These include, (a) significant cultural variations exist and can be quantified, thus cultural commonalities may also be measured (Hall, 1989; Hofstede, 1980; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998); (b) certain themes and images may transcend cultural variations, such as demonstrated through universal

symbols, metaphors, archetypes, and mythologies (Campbell, 1988; Jung, 1968; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980); (c) these themes and images may be effective in enhancing classroom resonance and effectiveness (Freire, 1993; Meskill & Swan, 1996; Meyer, 2002); and (d) these transcultural themes and images may be better defined and assessed through qualitative and quantitative measures, as was undertaken in the current study.

The study was based on the researcher's emergent conviction over several years teaching international university courses, that certain themes and images do indeed resonate across the wide diversity of cultural dimensions found among international students. The evidential roots of this conviction are detailed in chapter 3. Furthermore, it is assumed that by identifying and applying themes and images that may resonate across nationalities and cultures, instructors may be better able to prepare course materials that will enhance the learning experience as well as the personal and career development of international students.

This study was grounded in a conceptual premise that international cultural variations are profound and readily measurable. Consequently, cultural commonalities may also be measured. Dutch anthropologist Geert Hofstede investigated various dimensions of culture in his original and definitive cultural study, demonstrating that cultural differences may be effectively measured by use of the survey process, producing a databank with answers to 117,000 survey questions. Subsequently, the research of Fernandez et al. (1997) expanded Hofstede's work with a quantitative examination of cultural differences in nine countries not originally included in Hofstede's study, collecting data from a sample of 7,201 respondents through surveys comprised of 5-point



Lickert-type responses to questions measuring cultural variation. Although Hofstede's methodology incorporated key criteria of consistency of setting within a company culture, the aim of the study was to discover cultural variation between homogenous groups, rather than find transcultural commonalities between diverse groups—the opposite aim of the current study.

Other cultural observers have developed similar measurement tools for dissecting the mindset of a society. Hall (1989) defined various and often-cited cultural dimensions, including those of high and low context consideration of circumstances, monochronic versus polychronic perceptions of time, issues of personal space, and patterns of information flow. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) provided an eight-dimensional algorithm for measuring cultures, with a continuum between poles of cultural characteristics. These studies demonstrate the validity of efforts to describe, quantify, and qualify cultural variations, as addressed in the current study. As with Hofstede's research, these studies were limited to identifying variations between cultures, rather than seeking a means to transcend those differences. However, they do provide a valuable insight into quantitative methods that may be applied to the current study, augmenting the qualitative observations with an objective quantitative measurement tool as detailed in the chapter 3 description of the study methodology.

Among the more interesting and applicable works on culture—especially relating to issues in international education—are the writings of Paulo Freire. Freire's (1993) applied theory was actually quite simple: speak to the students using themes, images, symbols, and words that resonate with them. Addressing the needs of Brazil's underclass,

Freire proposed developing an educational curriculum that includes a group of themes that unites the educator and the educatee in a knowing process. The educator, through structured research, would need to learn the “peasants’ manner of seeing the world,” seeking out the themes and problems so ingrained in the peasants’ way of living (Freire, 1973, p. 159). Freire (1993) attempted to identify the resonant themes by a qualitative process of examining the students’ lives, first considering some of the universal themes of life, then finding locally resonant themes through interview and observation. He observed the use of symbols in effective communications, where “in the relationship between communication and dialogue the Subjects engaged in dialogue express themselves through a system of linguistic signs” (Freire, 1973, p. 138). He found that for there to be a successful transference of meaning or learning, there should be a common frame of reference meaningful to both and all communicators.

Freire proved especially successful in adapting his teaching method and molding it into themes and images that resonated with his students—the impoverished and illiterate workers of Brazil’s villages and cities (Elias & Merriam, 1995, p. 146). Although an excellent insight into the viability of effectively applied themes in the classroom, his work was directed to a national sub-culture, rather than the international cultural diversity examined in the current study.

Other theorists have also specified themes and images that may resonate across differing cultures. For example, Jung (1968) identified certain archetypes that transcend cultural differences and may “reproduce themselves in any time or in any part of the world” (p. 58), such as the universal theme of a paradise or golden age. The universal

resonance of certain themes and images may be found regardless of place and time, even when contributory factors such as transmission from ancestors or migratory cross fertilization may be ruled out (p. 58). The universal resonance to particular themes and symbols may reside in a collective consciousness—the “part of the psyche which retains and transmits the common psychological inheritance” of all humanity (p. 98). He detailed a number of ancient symbolic images and myths that have survived to the current day from antiquity (p. 97). These archetypal themes include the *cosmogonic myth* (or the creation of the world and humanity), the symbolism of rebirth such as demonstrated in common rites of solstice, the hero in battle to rescue the distressed, sexual images of fertility, themes of shadows challenging the ego, symbols of transcendence and release, and so forth. While these themes and images may be universal, they may prove challenging to reduce to practical applications for achieving transcultural resonance in the classroom.

Campbell (1988), in a treatment on the power of mythologies, suggested as well various images and themes that may be universally resonant, as applied and passed on by storytellers and artists. Such mythologies may be considered expressions of penultimate truths—“penultimate because the ultimate cannot be put into words” (p. 206). These mythic images and themes may have been expressed by tribal cave dwellers under a flickering torch (p. 100), or by more contemporary conveyors of mythological re-enactments such as movie producers (p. 102).

Some of Campbell’s (1988) identified ancient mythological themes include the mystery of death coinciding with the mystery of life, the relationship of humanity with

the animal world, the motif of procuring food, the relationship of women to the outer world, the transformation of children into adults, the relationship of the individual to the group, and so on (pp. 104-105). He described marriage as another culturally transcendent theme, as common mythologies reference a divided soul seeking union through the joining of man and wife (pp. 5-6). Several of these themes find a place in the current study as well, as some of the most resonant clips with international students include themes of interpersonal relations between men and women, and images of interaction with animals.

Related research has indicated that the effective use of such themes and images in the classroom may provide a common reference point and a rich method of cognitive resonance. Meyer (2002) found that meaningful learning can be assisted through the use of images when students find a cognitive engagement through a combination of *verbal* and *pictorial* processes. Verbal modes of instruction include words spoken through lecture and discussion, while pictorial modes employ the use of “static graphics (such as photographs, illustrations, figures, and charts) and dynamic graphics (such as animation and video)” (pp. 61-62). The multimedia application of themes and images may also provide a tool where students might discover and develop meaning, employing the graphic media in a student-centered experience that can encourage discourse and empower critical thinking (Meskill & Swan, 1996). While much of this research has been primarily directed at domestic students; the current study expanded the field of participants to the cultural diversity found in an international classroom.

The current study will also be grounded within the contextual relevance of a transforming academic environment, where higher education is significantly impacted by emerging forces of globalization and technological innovations. The conceptual foundation of applied cultural assessments, driving transformational forces, and the study's methodology of measuring possible transcultural resonance of themes and images are further visited in the chapter 2 literature review and the chapter 3 explanation of research methods.

### Operational Definitions

The aim of this study was to identify which themes and images might create a positive resonance among international students—an upbeat and sympathetic experience in the room. Some themes and images may create a negative resonance, or also a discordant dissonance disrupting the educational flow, or may simply incur an indifferent reaction. Within the study framework, this study relied on specifically applied terms, which—though grounded in common understanding—may be deployed with a novel application regarding the research method.

*Resonance.* The use of this term was applied in a metaphorical sense to interpersonal relations, borrowing from the dictionary definitions relating to acoustics: An “intensification and prolongation of sound ... produced by sympathetic vibration” (American Heritage Dictionary, 1991). Merriam-Webster (2005) refers to resonance as a “quality of evoking response.” The term *resonance* in this study denoted an intense and prolonged common response evoked by a presented theme or image. A resonant response

in the classroom may generate a commonly felt reaction or sympathetic vibration, intensified through the shared experience.

*Dissonance.* The use of this term also was also applied in a metaphorical sense, resembling the dictionary definition relating to acoustics: “A harsh, disagreeable combination of sounds; discord” (American Heritage Dictionary, 1991). Merriam-Webster (2005) defines dissonance as a “lack of agreement.” The term *dissonance* in this study denoted a disagreeable response by the students to a presented theme or image. A dissonant response may generate a discordant tension in the classroom, with expressed or unspoken antagonisms intensified through the conflicted experience.

*Image.* An image is a “reproduction or imitation of the form of a person or thing” (Merriam-Webster, 2005). For the purpose of this study, the presented images were reproduction of forms through media consisting of video clips and still photographs projected through PowerPoint presentations. The image may have been a realistic or abstract presentation of a person, place, or thing related to the marketing of a particular product or service.

*Theme.* A theme may be defined as a “subject or topic of discourse or of artistic representation” (Merriam-Webster, 2005). The term *theme* in this study denoted the unifying collective meaning of the represented images. For example, two people may be interacting with one another as part of an interpersonal relationship; an actor in a clip may be demonstrating the impact of a product on the human life cycle; or the promoter of a product may appeal to a consumer’s sense of patriotism or nationalism. Within these

examples, the topical themes of relationships, life cycles, and nationalism were the measurement targets.

This study sought out themes and images that may evoke a *positive resonance* in the international classroom. It is also possible to define a *negative resonance* (or students exhibiting a resonantly negative reaction to a theme), or a *positive dissonance* or a *negative dissonance* (or students with a net positive or negative though varied reaction), as well as an overall neutrality or indifference to the presented themes and images. The application of these terms to the research method is further defined in chapter 3.

Additionally, to help qualify the aspiration toward a transcultural level of interaction in the classroom, I developed a self-defined hierarchy of terms broadly describing ascending levels of cultural relations:

- *Monocultural*: cultures are segregated into their own homogeneous cultural group
- *Multicultural*: various cultures are gathered together in the same room
- *Crosscultural*: various gathered cultures are talking at one another
- *Intercultural*: various gathered cultures are communicating in understanding with one another
- *Transcultural*: various cultures have moved beyond their cultural variations into common ground, transcending the cultural differences

#### Assumptions, Delimitations, and Limitations

This study's framework included a presentation of themes and images, by way of advertisements and television commercials viewed by participating international students during the regular presentation of materials in international advertising and marketing

courses. A similar study might be conducted among international students relying on other thematic media such as art, music, or literature, although those media may provide a more limited variety of themes and images from which to select and measure within the constraints of classroom time. Though certain forms of images presented in the classroom (such as static paintings and photographs) may fail to operate transculturally and without regard for social contexts (Loizos, 2002, p. 96), a benefit of using commercials and other advertisements is that they provide a near-globally recognizable and familiar medium (Mueller, 1996, p. 10). Television commercials and most other forms of advertisement are efficient quantum packets of communication; demographically resonant and necessarily concise. They are commonly-accepted expressions of relevant life situations and themes. Advertisements might be considered as practical applications maximizing market-driven efficiencies toward the understanding of human motives and behavior, as modified for specifically targeted demographics. It could well be as British writer Norman Douglas observed, that we “can tell the ideals of a nation by its advertisements.” However, though commercials may be a commonly recognized form of communication, it does not mean individual commercials’ themes and images are commonly interpreted across cultural groups. Indeed, there are numerous examples where a message resonant or appropriate in one cultural setting may prove disastrous if misapplied to another culture (Anholt, 2000, p. 17).

The images and themes referenced in this study necessarily derive from the creative mindsets and incentives of international marketing and advertising. The industry produces audience appeals covering in large part the panorama of human desires, needs,



and emotions. Yet the presented images and themes are hardly representative of the great diversity of human experience in the potential realms of transcultural communications, especially in the loftier dimensions of psychology and intellect, heart and spirit.

However, advertising is used in some way to promote almost every good or service consumed by almost every type of person on earth, so most fundamental human needs and aspirations are at some time likely to be addressed through the ubiquitous display of advertisements. The commercials and other advertisements used within this study were obtained through databases with vast collections of advertising messages gathered from around the world.

Groups of international students participating in courses over the years 2002 through 2005 were in smaller classes than the prior years, following the 9/11 disaster where student visas to study in the United States were more difficult to obtain, and some students were more reluctant to study with US-based international programs. The average class size had dropped from more than 20 students to a class enrollment of 10 to 15 students, and some nationalities had especially curtailed attendance. However, the duration of the study was expanded over several quarters to ensure a larger sample.

Furthermore, students attending the study's international program held at a California university typically represent some of the higher-income and more privileged classes of their home countries, for example, children of government officials, corporate officers, and land owners. Yet Hofstede (1997) indicated that the examined core cultural dimensions tend to be independent of localized social variation and stratification in such sub-groupings as religion, generation, gender, and social class (pp. 15-17). The higher

social positions of the students also helps ensure they may well become key decision-makers in their home countries, underscoring the necessity for an effective and culturally enriching experience in their international studies.

There was also concern regarding research methodologies that involve more in-depth interview and survey processes, which may have resulted in culturally skewed results based on a student's cultural proclivity to volunteer (or not) for such activity. To avoid this, the data collection process consisted of informal interviews during regular class sessions, with the researcher relying on less intrusive observations of classroom dynamics, comments, room ambiance, and so on, as well as a simple and non-alienating measurement tool (Appendix A).

Finally, the theoretically transcultural images and themes visited in the study's global marketing and advertising courses were necessarily limited to those selected by message producers within the constraints and demands of the marketing industry, and the instructor's selection of these clips to illustrate industry practices. Other potentially transcultural themes and images may exist well beyond those that were observed in the current study within business courses, particularly given the wide array of other subjects international students may study.

### Social Significance of the Study

This study may serve to assess transcultural themes and images that might enhance the educational experience of international students as they interact with other nationalities in the classroom. Through improved cross-cultural interactions, international

students could benefit in a number of ways, including an increased comfort level in a strange environment, where, as mentioned earlier, students may awkwardly feel as if they know “the music without knowing the dance” (Adler, 2001, p. 99). A foreign environment that provides a familiar ambience through transcultural themes and images may not only reduce the pangs of isolation, but also help improve bonding between students as they are able to better relate to each other through common ground on an individual basis, and as they also enhance their integration within the entire class by finding common group reference points (Taylor, Marienau, & Fiddler, 2000).

Furthermore, students may find an expanded content relevancy by way of a transcultural context for the course materials. Such an application of contextually resonant themes and images may serve to better engage students’ attention in the learning process, as evidenced by the impressive learning results achieved by illiterate Brazilian farmers through Freire’s (1993) use of resonant graphics in a “contextual reality” (p. 104).

Beyond the academic and programmatic benefits gained from enhanced interactions among international students and instructors, strained global relations call for more effective communications within other international settings. As described above, many of the international students are coming from rather privileged backgrounds, and may well assume leadership positions in their home countries. The international students participating in well-designed transculturally educational programs may then progress to provide future cross-culturally skilled leadership in a conflicted global environment.

## Summary

This chapter provides a general introduction to the dissertation proposal, including the research problem, the nature, purpose, and significance of the study. In short, the study employed qualitative and quantitative methods to determine what sorts of themes and images might resonate across international cultural differences, to help provide for a more engaging and enriching educational experience in international classrooms. In the chapters ahead, chapter 2 provides a review of literature supporting the study, and chapter 3 describes the research methodology. Within the two concluding chapters, chapter 4 assesses the research findings, and chapter 5 presents conclusions and examines ways the findings may be applied to international course content development.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction

This chapter provides a review of related literature topics including the need for educators in higher learning to serve a growing diversity of international cultures, the nature and needs of international students, the variety of cultural variation, and how those variations may be addressed and possibly transcended in traditional and new models of classroom settings. These topics help establish the need for the current study, provide a foundation of methodologies and findings regarding the measurement of cultural variation, and offer some guideposts toward the goal of achieving transcultural resonance in the international classroom. This chapter also provides an overview of the literature to be applied to the study methodology in chapter 3.

As further detailed below, a review of the literature yielded some excellent classic and contemporary texts on matters and measurement of cultural variation, yet found very few research references applicable to the current study of transculturally resonant themes and images in an international classroom. There may be good reason for the dearth of research in this area. For a study of this sort to be viable, there are three key criteria that should be met. First, a sample needs to be diverse enough in international composition to provide valid observations on cultural variations; yet homogenous enough in purpose to ensure consistency between sample groups and an overall replicability and applicability of results. Second, the presentation of images and themes in the studied content must be consistent and repetitious to elicit verifiable observations between groups. Furthermore, those presentations must have some practical relevance to provide a continuous supply of

participants in a consistent setting. And third, the researcher must be competent to make global cultural observations and assumptions over an extended period of time in the repetitious settings. These conditions may be summed up as (a) sample diversity with context homogeneity, (b) consistency of the studied content, and (c) researcher global competency. Chapter 3 provides a description of how this current study met those conditions. The review of the literature includes consideration of how some prior studies may have met one or two of the conditions, yet perhaps failed to achieve the convergence of all three conditions necessary for a successful study of transcultural themes and images that may be employed for more effective learning in international classrooms.

#### Literature Review Resources

The literature for this study was gathered from a number of sources including research databases, international government and non-governmental organization reports, and university collections of scholarly journals and related texts. Among the academic databases relied on for the literature search:

- ERIC
- PsycINFOR
- Sociological Abstracts
- Business Source Premier
- MEDLINE
- Google Scholar

The database keyword searches were conducted with combinations of terms and phrases including *higher education*, *international*, *culture*, *cross-cultural*, *multicultural*, *transcultural*, and so forth. The research turned up several articles and texts addressing cultural issues in education, yet very few studies offered any specifics on how cultural

variations might be bridged or transcended in the international classroom. Some of the best results on transcultural relations were not found in education related publications, but in business and nursing journals, where market and social pressures are most active and reactive toward effective cross-cultural relations. Perhaps the current study will help to fill the literature void in the education field.

Additionally, the commercials and other advertisements presented within the study were mostly gathered from online databases serving international advertising and marketing professionals. Those professional databases include [adcritic.com](http://adcritic.com) and [adforum.com](http://adforum.com).

### The New Learning Environment

#### *The Demand for Cultural Awareness*

Among the top priorities for American and other academic leaders around the world is to meet the increasing local demand for higher education, as well as compete in the globally competitive marketplace for a greater share of international students (ACE, 2002). American institutions may find themselves at a disadvantage as “expanding needs, rising costs, and declining investments in international and foreign language training have led the United States to a dangerous shortfall of individuals with global competence”—a necessity not only for educational programs that appeal to international students, but to produce a knowledge of languages and cultures for a “sufficient and diverse pool of American students to meet the needs of government agencies, the private sector, and education itself” in a globalized environment (ACE, 2002, p. 7).

The American Council on Education has warned that the success of Americans involved in international endeavors including education and business depends on the global competence of our people (ACE, 2002). “Global competence is a broad term that ranges from the in-depth knowledge required for interpreting information affecting national security, to the skills and understanding that foster improved relations with all regions of the world” (p. 7). Global competence is demonstrated by such abilities as proficiency in a foreign language, and the ability to function effectively when relating to other cultural environments and value systems (p. 7). Undeveloped global competency is a shortcoming analysts have found in many American students and institutions. Though Americans may be well grounded in the principles of free-markets and the dynamics of international competition, if American academic leaders and students are not prepared to improve their understanding of other cultures and develop the “skills to live in a global economy, they are going to have a hard time” (Adam, 2003, p. 4).

The growing numbers of worldwide learners seeking opportunities to advance through higher education, and attracted to the appeal of a U.S. degree in the international marketplace, has American institutions eager to capture a portion of the “ever-increasing global audience” (Oblinger, Barone, & Hawkins, 2001, p. 11). Higher education analysts such as Georgetown University’s Martin Irvine (2003) have said this global demand matched with the enormous disparities in supply provide an “unprecedented market opportunity for educational services,” along with a “huge social and economic challenge for developed nations hoping to spread the benefits of globalization to the poor countries and expand the global marketplace” (p. 104):



Most people continue to see education as the only hope to forestall impending worldwide catastrophes and cultural misunderstanding and economic disparity. The need to exchange knowledge and learning across borders, cultures, and languages is felt more urgently than ever. (p. 104)

The numbers demonstrate a precipitous worldwide climb in higher education enrollments. From 1950 to 1997, global postsecondary education enrollments increased from 6.5 million in 1950 to 88.2 million in 1997, and are forecasted to reach 160 million by 2025 (Irvine, 2003). “In short, the global education marketplace represents an extraordinary opportunity” (p. 69).

Though the United States has seen a recent drop in the net numbers of international students attending American universities and colleges, a total of more than 720,000 international students for the academic year 2003/2004 still places the United States as a top choice for students studying outside of their home country, contributing some \$13 billion annually to the U.S. economy (IIE, 2004). In spite of this strong international interest in American academic institutions, those institutions offering education to other nations may frequently be insensitive to the characteristics of a local culture and the students’ particular needs (Newman, Couturier, & Scurry, 2004). Some analysts are criticizing that universities may offer lower quality programs abroad than are found on the home campus, and that the program content does not focus on local concerns, while the primary use of English as the language of instruction raises further questions “about cultural imperialism and homogenization. Developing countries would surely be ill-served if universities from the outside replaced local universities rather than supplemented them” (p. 28).

While the United States may dominate the rest of the world in attracting international students, it has often failed to offer much interest in the rest of the world in return. The United States withdrew from UNESCO in 1984, depriving scientific communities and higher educators of “important opportunities to participate in potentially beneficial cultural, scientific, and educational reforms” (ACE, 2002, p. 20). Inexplicably, state governments which have traditionally been responsible for developing American higher education policy, have frequently been “uninterested in and even hostile to international students, despite the fact that those students bring significant amounts of money into local economies and provide needed help as low-paid teaching and research assistance in public universities” (Altbach, 2004a, p. 11).

Another counter-juxtaposition of circumstance is that the demand for international education is so high while at the same time teachers skilled with global competence are so few (ACE, 2002). Universities and colleges lack sufficient foreign language and international studies faculty—especially in less common languages and nations—and faculty in professional disciplines such as “business, public health, law, and the environment, need greater international expertise. Lack of priority, rising costs, and dwindling funds from all sources have eroded higher education’s capacity to produce the numbers and variety of experts needed” (p. 12).

Global transformations has made it imperative that the United States have citizens with a broad set of international skills and crosscultural understanding, and far more international experts on a greater variety of world regions and issues. Meeting these needs will take a generation of education and reform. The federal government must act now. (p. 23)

*Global Technologies Link Diverse Cultures*

Large numbers of potential international students are precluded from studies in the United States due to travel, financial, and national barriers (Irvine, 2003). Education analysts forecast that the worldwide market for education could reach as high as \$2 trillion in revenues with the growth of for-profit education, along with universities opening transnational satellite campuses, and education content providers tapping communication technologies for opportunities in international *e-learning* (online and other interactive forms of higher education). This provides an opportunity for internationally and cross-culturally responsive e-learning organizations, through global outreach and agreements in opening markets (p. 70).

Technological innovations applied to education are coming so fast that scholars are unable to keep up with the developments in books and reports, and only the daily updated output of journalists can keep up with it all (Trow, 2001). With the rapid hardware and software breakthroughs, before long newer information technology will provide human interaction in a high-definition and three-dimensional telepresence, allowing for distance education to seem comparable to a face-to-face experience (Duderstadt, 2000). Already the current experience with the asynchronous distance learning process can be just as effective as the classroom experience, in terms of learning and costs, and in some technical ways may already be superior to regular courses (Bok, 2003). Majorities of academic leaders are expressing a belief that online education on the whole may prove equal or superior to face-to-face instruction, and will become even more so in the near years ahead (Allen & Seaman, 2003).

Several countries, such as India and South Africa, are already heavy importers of distance learning programs through top exporting countries including the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom; while other more developed countries are advancing their own distance learning technologies and programs (Eaton, 2002).

Distance education and training will also likely play an important role in expanding access to educational opportunities throughout Central and Eastern Europe, provided there is sufficient funding and regional collaboration to develop the necessary communication infrastructure (Moore & Tait, 2002, p. 54).

The World Bank (2002) found it a favorable development as new types of tertiary institutions take advantage of new education delivery opportunities provided by evolving technologies, but warned however that the dangers of digital divides within and between nations could counter the benefits. Most of the academic databases on the Internet are dominated by major universities in the northern countries, with content largely in English, which affects access and usage from other countries, particularly the poorer southern nations (Altbach, 2004b). “Academic institutions and countries unable to pay for access to these information sources find it difficult to participate fully in the networks,” a problem compounded by copyright and ownership restrictions that further limit access (p. 15). The transnational initiatives in higher education typically involve a south-to-north dynamic, “almost without exception dominated by the partner institution in the north—in terms of curriculum, orientation, and sometimes the teaching staff” (Altbach, 2004a, p. 8). Typically, the language of instruction is in English, even if that is not the language of the instructed country, and there is “often little effort to adapt

offshore programs to the needs or traditions of the country in which the programs are offered—they are simply exported impact” (p. 8).

The transforming capabilities of technology are empowering the rise of global universities, which are able to transcend national borders and draw together a wide range of student diversity in a virtual classroom setting (Levine, 2003). “The most successful institutions will be those that can respond the quickest and offer a high-quality education to an international student body” (p. 19). This dynamic could be further enhanced by a “dramatic expansion in international student numbers as English becomes the world language and U.S. higher education remains the global postsecondary leader” (p. 17).

Educators succeeding within this environment of globally dispersed students will need adept adaptability to diverse demographics and learning styles, as well as to profound cultural differences. This becomes especially problematic as the new technologies allow instructors to be ever more removed from the geographical and cultural settings of their students. Bruffee (2002) proposed that at the core of bridging cultural differences, resides the ability of “teaching the craft of mutual dependence and civil compatibility among diverse cultural communities,” and requires people becoming more aware that “many of the cultural assumptions and practices of their peers ... are deeply similar to their own and serve similar social, political, emotional, and spiritual ends” (p. 13). As the participation of diverse cultures may be especially pronounced within global distance learning programs, the program developers and educators should be especially sensitive to the range of cultural diversity within a class (Conceico, 2002).

### Theories of Cultural Variation

The purpose of this current study was not to study cultural variations, but to seek resonant reactions to themes and images in an international setting, whatever cultural variations there might be. However, it is useful to have a better idea of what cultural differences the study sought to transcend.

Cultural variations can range from different “ways of knowing” (Berrell, Gloet, & Wright, 2002), to clashes in managerial styles between Western and Asian joint-venture executives (Elashmawi, 1998), to diametric and seemingly irreconcilable opposition in fundamental ethical values (Singhapadki, Rawwas, Marta, & Ahmed, 1999). These cultural conflicts may impede globalization, international business partnerships, transfer of economic and social ideologies, and other critical areas of interrelations, even when all parties have a common aim of effective development in cross-cultural relations. The cultural differences may also disrupt cohesion in an international classroom. Though each of these studies mentioned here and ahead may provide reliable and valid examinations of cultural variations and consequent problems in international settings, they do not effectively consider methods for addressing cultural clashes in ways that—while allowing for the differences—might serve to transcend them. This shortcoming in the literature is further considered below.

Some students of international relations may find assessing and assigning cultural dimensions as a demeaning, stereotypical reduction of the rich complexities in human diversity. However, such a negative dynamic should not necessarily be the case. Adler (2001) observed that while it may be unethical to label people from certain ethnic groups

as *bad*, “grouping individuals into categories is neither good nor bad—it simply reduces complexity to manageable proportions” (p. 83).

Negative views of stereotyping simply cloud our ability to understand people’s actual behavior and impair our awareness of our own stereotypes. Everyone stereotypes. Rather than pretending not to stereotype, effective global managers therefore need to become aware of their cultural stereotypes and learn to set them aside when faced with contradictory evidence. (p. 83)

Students of international relations may also have a problem separating their own belief system when interacting with people from entirely different foundations (Adler, 2001; Calloway-Thomas, Cooper, & Blake, 1999). This may especially be the case between national cultures with extreme differences in regards to human relations and individual rights. Quite often it is not until travelers leave their own national culture behind that they begin to appreciate how profound and deeply rooted a cultural heritage might be (Adler, 2001). “In interacting with foreigners, we learn to recognize and value our fundamental humanity—our cultural similarities and dissimilarities” (p. 35). The cultural upbringing and identity we each carry bore deep into our attitudes and thought processes. Some have compared it to a fish swimming in water; the surrounding medium so encompasses the creature, it is unaware of the water as such, but simply perceives it as an all-embracing and inseparable reality (at least until the poor thing is hooked into the open air, and, with an overwhelming infusion of oxygen, the hapless fish might have a short but illuminating glimpse of alternate dimensions—a sort of culture shock).

Hofstede (1997) referred to culture as “software of the mind,” a computer-era appropriate axiom that designates the diverse selection of loaded programming each of us runs upon our not-too-dissimilar biological hardware:

Every person carries within him or herself patterns of thinking, feeling, and potential acting which were learned throughout their lifetime. Much of it has been acquired in early childhood, because at that time a person is most susceptible to learning and assimilating. (pp. 4-5)

Theorists perhaps need to rethink Hofstede's computer-age cultural metaphor as our understanding of computer function becomes more sophisticated. We may come to see social, political, and economic systems as an assortment of societal software, which can be readily upgraded, purged, and over-written. Culture instead may be considered the operating system, the very operational foundation upon which the software is run. We might have the best software program, but if it is not compatible with the native operating system, it just will not work.

In his original study, Hofstede (1980) classified dimensions of work-related value differences in 40 subject countries. The classifications may well be applied to cultural dimensions of the educational setting, including: *power distance* (or the extent to which individuals at lower levels accept their lack of autonomy and authority); *individualism* (or the relative importance of self and immediate family versus the collective social grouping); *masculinity* (or the extent to which traditionally "male" goals of wealth and recognition are acknowledged); and *uncertainty avoidance* (or the extent to which risk and ambiguity are acceptable). Hofstede later added a fifth dimension: *long-term orientation* (fostering virtues oriented towards future rewards), which interjected a growing understanding of Asian culture, specifically Confucian influence.

Hofstede (1984) surveyed employees of the pseudonymic "HERMES" corporation (IBM) in 66 counties from 1967-73, producing a databank with answers to 117,000 survey questions. As his subjects worked within a single company culture of a



multinational corporation, he deduced that the various differences between workers in different countries were due to their national cultures. Hofstede's exhaustive treatment of the research data included frequency distributions, correlations, and factor analyses of data across individuals; analysis of variance using country, occupation, sex, and age as criteria; and ecological correlations and factor analyses. To ensure stability of the data, these analyses were limited to 40 countries (p. 39). In order to test the relative contribution to the variance in the data of the four criterion variables of country, occupation, sex, and age, Hofstede performed a variance analysis (ANOVA) on a subsample of the data covering a wide range of respondents on all four criteria.

Although Hofstede's methodology incorporated key criteria of consistency of setting within the company culture, augmented with Hofstede's qualified global competency, the aim of the study was to discover cultural variation between homogenous groups, rather than find transcultural similarities between diverse groups—the opposite aim of the current study. Furthermore, in spite of the precision and scope of Hofstede's research, his methodology has been called into question, such as misdefinition of cultural indicators, significant cross-loadings of measurement factors, and aggregate analysis of data reducing power of subsequent analyses (Fernandez, Carlson, Setpina, & Nicholson, 1997, pp. 2-3).

Hofstede's influential work has been revisited and updated for the times. For example, Adler (2001), while incorporating Hofstede's findings and categories, modified the *masculinity* dimension with a rephrased continuum measuring cultural orientations toward *career success* and *quality of life* (p. 61). Furthermore, the research of Fernandez

et al. (1997) expanded Hofstede's cultural dimensions to countries including Russia and China, which were not included in Hofstede's original work and methodology (IBM had no factories in those countries at the time—a target group of Hofstede's research).

The Fernandez et al. study (1997) was a quantitative examination of cultural differences in nine countries conducted by a multinational team, collecting data in 1989 and 1990 from a sample of 7,201 respondents through surveys comprised of 5-point Lickert-type responses to questions measuring cultural variation. Respondents were business professionals and advanced business students: 1,819 respondents were from the United States, 836 respondents were German, 285 respondents were Japanese, 748 respondents were from the former Yugoslavia, 982 respondents were from the People's Republic of China, 1,236 respondents were Russian, 879 respondents were Venezuelan, 111 respondents were Mexican, and 305 respondents were Chilean. Augmenting and adjusting Hofstede's results, the newer study demonstrates a marked similarity between Russia and China on all the selected cultural dimensions, including the highest levels of *power distance* and *uncertainty avoidance* (pp. 5-8). The United States now ranked higher in *uncertainty avoidance*, and Japan came in lower in that dimension than in the original study. The United States continued to rank number one in *individualism*, while Russia topped out the scale in the realm of *collectivism*. China scored the highest on the dimension of *masculine* countries, with Russia also scoring above the mean. Germany now resided below the mean as *feminine* in the current study, a shift from the masculinity of Hofstede's study. Though the Fernandez et al. study provided another useful measurement of cultural variations and a testament to the enduring value of Hofstede's

fundamental methodologies, the study also sought—as did Hofstede’s and other referenced studies—to identify cultural variation between homogenous groups, rather than the opposite aim of the current study: to find transcultural similarities between diverse groups.

Numerous other theorists have set forth various models measuring cultural differences in societies around the world. For example, Ackoff (1999) echoed Hofstede, when he concluded that “culture is to society what personality is to the individual” (p. 239), along with the observation that identified personality types may also serve as cultural types. Ackoff used a personality-type model to measure the respective personalities of selected nations. Among Ackoff’s four basic personality types: (a) *Subjective-Internalizers* (SIs), who characteristically respond to internal stimuli by changing themselves; (b) *Subjective-Externalizers* (SEs), who characteristically respond to internal stimuli by changing their environments; (c) *Objective-Internalizers* (OIs), who characteristically respond to external stimuli by changing themselves; and (d) *Objective-Externalizers* (OEs), who characteristically respond to external stimuli by changing their environments (p. 224). This model allowed for the assignment of personality types to national cultures, for example the United States as an *SE* personality-type nation, the USSR as an *OE* nation, France as an *SI* nation, and the United Kingdom as an *OI* nation. These national personality types may result in problems between nations when interacting in conflicting personality modes, such as the difficulties between the SE-type United States and the OE-type USSR over arms control during the Cold War (p. 241). Though this study is again useful for defining cultural differences between nations, it

differed from the aim of the current study in seeking means to transcend those cultural variations in a common setting such as the international classroom.

Harrison (2000) detailed a 10-step outline in how various cultural characteristics can influence how societies progress and/or remain static, depending upon their attitudes toward time, work, frugality, education, merit, community, ethics, justice, authority, and secularism (pp. 299-300). Of these 10 dimensions, at least 2 of them correlate with Hofstede (1980) as he defined which cultural dimensions play a larger role in socioeconomic development: *time orientation* and *community*. Hofstede divided these two dimensions into terms of *uncertainty avoidance* and *individualism*. Here, Harrison observed that progressive cultures are more focused on the future (with its degree of uncertainty); while static cultures tend to dwell in the past or the present (a more certain timeframe). Even more interesting is the way Harrison interpreted the role of *community*: in progressive cultures, the bounds of interests extend beyond the family to the larger society; while in static cultures, the family is the narrow focus of trust and identity. In contrast, Hofstede (1997) determined a *collectivist* culture is at an economic disadvantage to more *individualist* cultures, with individualism as a trait more prominent in fast-developing societies (p. 77).

Other cultural observers have developed similar measurement tools for dissecting the mindset of a society. For example, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) provided an eight-dimensional algorithm for measuring cultures, with a continuum between poles of cultural characteristics that may influence socioeconomic development (pp. 8-11): (a) relationships with people, (b) universalism versus particularism,

(c) individualism versus communitarianism, (d) neutral versus emotional, (e) specific versus diffuse, (f) achievement versus ascription, (g) attitudes to time, and (h) attitudes to environment.

Again, two of these dimensions (*individualism* versus *communitarianism* and *attitudes to time*) correlate to two of the Hofstede dimensions key to social interrelations, *individualism* and *uncertainty avoidance*. The first correlation of dimensions uses the identical term of *individualism*; the second correlation between *uncertainty avoidance* and *attitude to time* could measure, among other attributes, a culture's preference for present and near-term future sureties, or a greater comfort with longer-term uncertainty.

There can be an understandable apprehension to apply such sweeping characterizations to an entire population within a culture, which may account for some of the dearth of materials addressing cultural dimensions within theories of adult education. While each culture may contain individuals with diverse positions on a cultural dimension continuum, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) observed that it is the distribution around an average that can be used to define general cultural characteristics (p. 25). They also used an underwater metaphor reminiscent of our earlier water-world fish, in that most of a culture lies "beneath awareness in the sense that no one bothers to verbalize it, yet it forms the roots of action," much like an iceberg with its largest part beneath the sea (p. 24).

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998) offered a mixed-method treatise; an appealing combination of qualitative assessment interspersed with scholarly references. The authors describe differences in cultural orientation based on their 15 years of

academic and field research, and most of the case studies and anecdotes provided throughout the book are recollections of examples gathered “in the course of more than 1000 cross-cultural training programs” given in more than 20 countries (p. 1). Though the text provides a valuable collection of qualitative impressions, the authors’ findings may have been better served with additional quantitative measures, such as applied to the current study.

The various cultural dimensions may play out in various and challenging ways when intermixed in an international education setting (Calloway-Thomas, Cooper, & Blake, 1999). One of the most evident dimensions to the instructor could be the individualist/collective differences between students, where collectivist students may be reluctant to speak up in class or challenge an instructor, while individualistic students will be more likely to engage in classroom conflicts without fear of *losing face* (pp. 195-196). Furthermore, a key factor in how instructors might effectively interact with their students is the power distance dimension. An instructor may need to vary the interaction styles between culturally varied students in an international course, depending on the student’s cultural preference for a power-distanced and teacher-centered classroom, or a more egalitarian setting where students prefer self discovery and problem solving. In a learner-centered approach within small power distance societies, teachers may encourage students to initiate classroom discussions, develop their own learning paths, and even challenge and contradict the teacher (p. 196).

Educators may also need to adjust their style of interaction with students from high uncertainty avoidance cultures. This may be especially critical in the way instructors

present new information, phrase discussion questions, or assign tasks, and whether students are more comfortable in highly structured learning situations, or if they would prefer a looser and more informal environment (p. 197).

Finally, effective instructors of international and culturally-diverse students might give consideration to the feminine or masculine aspects of a student's culture. This may influence the grading structure or other forms of feedback students will seek and accept in relation to their course performance.

In feminine societies, teachers avoid openly praising students because academic achievement is less important than successful interpersonal relationships, and cooperation among students is fostered. ... In masculine societies, teachers openly praise good students because academic achievement is highly regarded and competition is fostered. (1999, Calloway-Thomas, Cooper, & Blake, p. 198)

### Transcultural Learning

Given the wide and disparate range of cultural variations and the polar demands they might place on an instructor in managing an international classroom, the challenge to find common ground and tactics among international students may seem daunting indeed. However some earlier studies have suggested the way. Adler (2001) advised that “with care, we can avoid our ethnocentric default options. We can learn to see, understand, and transcend our cultural conditioning” (p. 99).

When working in other cultures, we can emphasize description rather than interpretation or evaluation, and thus minimize self-fulfilling stereotypes and premature judgments. We can recognize and use our initial stereotypes as guides rather than rejecting them as unsophisticated simplifications. Effective cross-cultural communication presupposes the interplay of alternative realities. It rejects the actual or potential domination of one reality over another. (p. 99)

If one is to contrast the development of children individually with the evolution of the species (in a similar vein to Haeckel's observation that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny), it may be argued that signs and symbols, evolving into words, are the earliest forms of transmitting knowledge from one developing intelligence to another, both as individuals and as a species. Vygotsky (1978) proposed that the exchange of commonly understood signs, symbols, and words serve "first and foremost as a means of social contact with other people" (p. 28). The use of symbols and symbolic actions in intelligent communication and learning may be as simple as tying a knot for a memory aid; or an elementary pointing, which may have evolved from a lower-intelligence reaching for an object, into a higher-intelligence cognitive abstraction of indicating with a pointed finger. These acts of pointing or tying knots, or other such *reconstructive processes* in a human's development, are "the creation and use of a number of artificial stimuli. These play an auxiliary role that permits human beings to master their own behavior, at first by external means and later by more complex inner operations" (p. 73).

Freire (1973) also observed the use of symbols in effective communications, where "in the relationship between communication and dialogue the Subjects engaged in dialogue express themselves through a system of linguistic signs" (p. 138). For there to be a successful transference of meaning or learning, a common frame of reference meaningful to both and all communicators should exist. The human animal has been empowered to elevate the use of gestures, symbols, and signs through the power of spoken language, again evolving within the species and the individual as intellectual abilities unfolded. The spoken word itself became the powerful arbitrator of exchanged



meaning. It is through the word that we are empowered to transfer learning and indeed transform one another on a global scale by way of communication with new technologies. Still any word is hollow without a resonant substance of meaning. The importance of Vygotsky and Freire's insights into the use of symbols, signs, words, and meaning becomes all the more clear when considering the purposes of intellectual resonance in human education.

Freire's (1993) applied theory was actually quite simple: speak to the students using themes, images, symbols, and words that resonate. Freire accused educators—as well as politicians—of often failing to communicate understandably with the peasant class “because their language is not attuned to the concrete situation of the people they address. Accordingly, their talk is just alienated and alienating rhetoric” (p. 96).

To bridge this communication schism, Freire (1973) proposed developing an educational curriculum that includes a group of themes that unites the educator and the educatee in a knowing process. The educator, through structured research, would need to learn the “peasants' manner of seeing the world,” which contains the themes and problems so ingrained in the peasants' way of living (p. 159). These themes in turn generate other themes (Freire referred to them as *generative themes*), in an ongoing process of identifying ever more resonant ways of communicating well.

If one offers the peasants their own theme, so that in the act of knowing they can dialogue on it with the educator ... it is apprehended in its relationship with other related themes through the transformation undergone by the perception of reality. (p. 159)

Freire (1993) attempted to identify the generative themes by working through concentric circles of examining the students' lives, moving from the general to the

particular, such as first considering some of the universal themes of life, then finding locally resonant themes. One such universal theme proposed by Freire was the “fundamental theme of our epoch ... that of *domination*—which implies its opposite, the theme of *liberation*, as the objective to be achieved” (p. 103).

It is this tormenting theme which gives our epoch the anthropological character mentioned earlier. In order to achieve humanization, which presupposes the elimination of dehumanizing oppression, it is absolutely necessary to surmount the limit-situations in which people are reduced to things. (p. 103)

To find a localized relevance for an identified theme, Freire proposed to present it as a posed problem in a way relevant to the “significant dimensions of an individual’s contextual reality, the analysis of which will make it possible for him to recognize the interaction of the various components” (Freire, 1993, p. 104). Once resonant themes have been identified and codified, those themes may be represented not only through words, but also graphically through photographs, drawings or posters. Freire warned educators to keep in mind that a graphic is simply a tool representing a theme, and should not be treated as more than that (for example as an icon, or as an object of study in itself)—it is “merely, however, a point of reference. A visual point of reference is just that and no more” (p. 164).

Freire proved especially successful in adapting his teaching method and molding it into themes and images that resonated with his target students, in this case the impoverished and illiterate workers of Brazil’s villages and cities. In fact, so successful were Freire’s techniques, that within just 45 days, 300 workers in the city of Angicos had learned to read and write (Elias & Merriam, 1995, p. 146). Although Freire provided

insights into one the most important criteria undertaken in the current study—a consistency in the presentation of resonant themes and images—his research falls short in two of the other key criteria addressed in the research of transcultural applicability: multinational diversity in the sample, and a global perspective in the research.

In relation to a resonant spirit that may be achieved in the classroom, Goleman (1995) observed that certain emotions might be contagious between communicators, “a part of a tacit exchange that happens in every encounter. We transmit and catch moods from each other in what amounts to a subterranean economy of the psyche in which some encounters are toxic, some nourishing” (p. 115). These emotional exchanges may occur in imperceptible ways, but nonetheless have profound impact on our outlook and attitudes. “The way a salesperson says thank you can leave us feeling ignored, resented, or genuinely welcomed and appreciated. We catch feelings from one another as though they were some kind of social virus” (p. 115). Certain transcultural themes and images, such as babies or personal relationships, may engender a shared emotional response, contagious in the classroom.

An emotional response to stimuli may be expressed through commonly shared physical reactions. Ekman, Sorenson, and Friesen (1969) found a *pan-cultural* reaction among diverse cultures in participants’ response to presented images in photographs expressing a series of facial expressions. The study included participants throughout 21 countries and cultures within geographical regions of Africa, Europe, Asia, Eastern Europe, South America, and the United States. The study participants each selected an emotional term from a short list of six to ten options to describe the facial expression

depicted in a photograph. The participants demonstrated a high majority of agreement identifying what emotions were facially expressed in the series of photographs—in particular the images demonstrating emotions of happiness, anger, fear, disgust, and surprise (Ekman, 1999, pp. 304-305).

In *every* case, the majority in each of the 21 countries agreed about the pictures that showed happiness, those that showed sadness and those that showed disgust. For surprise expressions there was agreement by the majority in 20 out of the 21 countries, for fear on 19 out of 21, and for anger in 18 out of 21. In those 6 cases in which the *majority* did not choose the same emotion as was chosen in very other country, the *most frequent* response (although it was not the majority), was the same as was given by the majority in the other countries. (Ekman, 1999, p. 305)

Ekman et al.'s (1969) methods and findings have held up well over the ensuing years, even when confronted with numerous challenges (Ekman, 1999). Among the challenges was that not every culture was represented in the study, which undermined its claims of universality. Ekman (1999) responded that no study could ever claim that anything is universal if the standard was every country—and even every sub-culture within a country—must be included for valid results; and offered his own counterpoint that indeed within his study it would not have been plausible to find “such high agreement in so many countries—for 21 is not a small number, and 10 of them were not Western—if expressions are not universal” (p. 305). Ekman considered one of the most serious challenges to the findings of universality was that perhaps all participants in the study had learned to interpret expressions from a common source, such as “watching *Sesame Street* on television” (p. 306). This challenge was addressed, however, by including participants in a preliterate and isolated culture of South Fore in Papua, New Guinea, where these “stone-age people, who could not have learned expressions from the

media, chose the same expressions for each emotion as had the people in the 21 literature cultures” (p. 306).

The methodology in Ekman’s study (1999) had been complicated by a number of confounding factors, such as differing forms of a smile—where the enjoyment smile may be indicated by an upturn in the corners of the lips accompanied by contracted muscles around the eyes, versus the non-enjoyment smile involving only the smiling lips (pp. 302-303). Furthermore, though there may be a similarity in the facial expression of various emotions, there is a confounding array of variables that might evoke certain reactions, such as a cultural difference in what people may find fearsome (Watson, 2004, p. 43). However, developments in neuroscientific research such as the Facial Action Coding System (FACS) have been deployed to localize emotions to particular parts of the human brain, enabling researchers to “identify and construct facial expressions that have been shown to exhibit high cross-cultural agreement as to the emotion being presented” (p. 17). Regardless of the variety of emotional stimuli inducing a certain reaction, the particular expression of an emotional reaction—in this case, facial—may be commonly if not universally shared.

Another among the transcultural commonalities instructors and learners may employ is an andragogical focus on shared experience—the experiences that both educator and educatee bring to their respective desks. This focus on experience includes “attending to experience, interpreting experience, relying on experience, using experience as a point of reference, and creating references” (Taylor, Marienau, & Fiddler, 2000, p. 43). These experiences also allow learners to engage in *reflection* and *construct*

*meaning*, both essential aspects of effective adult learning. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) also considered common experiences and reference points within cultures, exhibited in the use of metaphors. These metaphorical references may be demonstrated through conceptual constructions such as “argument is war,” evidenced in such adages as “your claims are *indefensible*” or “he *attacked every weak point* in my argument” (p. 4). These common reference points may be confounded, however, when sub-themes intrude upon or obscure other aspects of an applied metaphor. For example, the metaphorical concept that “time is money” may be contained within the metaphor of “argument is war,” because the participants warring through argument are also sharing their time with one another in a valuable and even cooperative exchange of discourse (p. 10). This is further complicated in international settings where metaphorical references and meaning may vary between cultures (p. 19).

Along with searching out ways to bridge cultural differences through common experience, educators may also seek ways to transcend those differences, where shared commonalities between students may help render cultural differences as a secondary concern, as Freire sought to find themes that resonant within a cultural niche. The core of the solution to organizational and societal adaptation to cross-cultural macrosystems, Bruffee (2002) proposed, is in “teaching the craft of mutual dependence and civil compatibility among diverse cultural communities,” and by people becoming more aware that “many of the cultural assumptions and practices of their peers ... are deeply similar to their own and serve similar social, political, emotional, and spiritual ends” (p. 13). Bruffee suggested three principles that might help achieve a more culturally harmonious

end: (a) recognize that “most cultural communities are nearly identical in many of the most rudimentary elements of social structure, needs, and desires”; (b) further recognize that “culturally diverse communities nested together in heterogeneous societies do share solid common ground”; and (c) find that “taking the common ground requires learning the intricacies and tact of re-negotiating membership on one’s own cultures and of finding new occasions to negotiate across the boundaries that divide cultural communities” (pp. 14-15).

Coinciding with resonant themes, there are certain universal characteristics that educators and students may develop to assist in assuaging cultural differences.

Jongewaard (2001) identified six citizenship characteristics of *transcultural universalism*: cross-cultural adaptability, geographical global awareness, contextual global awareness, empathetic activism, shared values, and trans-cultural awareness. “Effective global citizens will have a working knowledge of these categories ... Teachers trained in these areas will have the knowledge and skills to teach their own students about the universals that unite us all, despite our many differences” (p. 6). A drive toward such transcultural competence might be approached in three developmental stages: an intracultural “*I* stage,” or “cultural understanding in personal and micro-cultural-terms”; an intercultural “*we* stage,” or “cultural comparisons in local and macrocultural terms”; and a transcultural “everybody stage” where “notions of cultural relativism and interdependence develop, along with membership in the human family and world citizenship” (p. 6).

Well-intentioned educators should beware a difference, however, between achieving a transcultural environment, as opposed to imposing a particular worldview on the international classmates. Freire (1993) warned against a form of cultural invasion, where misguided educators may “penetrate the cultural context of another group, in disrespect of the latter’s potentialities; they impose their own view of the world upon those they invade and inhibit the creativity of the invaded by curbing their expression” (p. 152).

There a number of ways instructors of international students may develop appropriate skills to employ appropriate transcultural contexts for learning. As one such example, Klapan (2001) observed that the educational needs and abilities of all adults might be regarded as both human and societal, motivating and encouraging individual development in accordance with the greater social and even global needs. Further, Calloway-Thomas et al. (1999, p. 246) proposed ten fundamental rules for achieving intercultural effectiveness:

1. Give people the benefit of the perceptual doubt.
2. Minimize confrontations.
3. Ask for clarification.
4. Use “I” instead of “you” to deflect blame.
5. Try to look at people as individuals rather than as members of ethnic groups.
6. Seek common ground.
7. Be flexible in selecting words and actions.
8. Learn how to distinguish between “because” and “in spite of” reactions.



9. Recognize the fact that people communicate differently.

10. Develop empathy.

Researchers have determined that American institutions—among the primary providers of distance learning—may do more to address the particular needs of international students (e.g., Pinheiro, 2001; Udoh, 2000; Macia, 1999). Pinheiro (2001) proposed that “international students’ academic needs as learners may have been overlooked by American universities. This has become cause for dissatisfaction and has impacted the academic experience of many international students” (p. 3). International students may achieve more learning success through an enhanced experience of engagement and connectedness.

Positive participation was described as experiences where learners and teachers were actively engaged as co-learners and co-decision makers in the teaching-learning process ... the readings and the discussions in the classroom were relevant to the needs and interests of the learners and took into consideration the learners’ previous knowledge and professional experience. (p. 6)

Udoh (2000) based a quantitative dissertation on the premise that foreign students frequently encounter problems adjusting to new social environments while attending institutions of higher education. The purpose of this study was to describe the level of social difficulty experienced by foreign students from different regions of the world while studying in the United States, specifically at Louisiana State University. The target population for this study’s survey consisted of 748 undergraduate foreign students enrolled at Louisiana State University (LSU) in the spring of 2000. The sample consisted of 178 of such students enrolled in English classes during the spring 2000 semester. The number of actual participants was 105, which represented 59% of the sample. The instrument used in

this study was a Social Situation Questionnaire. Survey data comparisons between such characteristics as gender, marital status, length of experience in home country, field of study, and so forth were conducted using ANOVA and t-tests. The study concluded that undergraduate foreign students at LSU experience low levels of social difficulty. The areas witnessing the largest levels of social distress included “making friends your own age” and “appearing in front of an audience” (p. 83). To address this finding, the author recommended that the university international center should provide more opportunities for cross-cultural interactions. This study provided a useful example of methodology; however it provided little insight into the current study’s purpose of seeking means to transcend cultural variation in the international classroom.

Macia (1999) prepared a qualitative dissertation exploring the transcultural experiences of ESOL students from Cuba, and sought to connect their lived experiences to literature in the classroom. The purpose of the study was to describe and explain the transcultural perspectives of six high school and community college students—four Cuban-born and two American-born but raised in the Cuban-American culture. It investigated their lived transcultural experiences. The data were collected through student interviews, a researcher’s journal, and document reviews. Among the exploratory questions which guided the study: What are the underlying themes that account for the Cuban NNS students’ transcultural experiences? What are the universal structures found among Cuban NNS students’ transcultural experiences and the Cuban-American, native English/Spanish speaking (NESS) students’ experiences? Macia observed that the study’s survey provided a better understanding of the participating students’ transcultural

experiences, and showed the potential of connecting their perspectives to literature in the classroom. Macia concluded that secondary and higher educators, administrators, and curriculum specialists should use “more qualitative research to investigate the transcultural experiences of ESOL students from different cultures, emphasizing the cultural needs of each school and/or college,” as this might lead to a better understanding of students’ needs (p. 178). This study is especially relevant to the current research into themes and images that may transcend a specific cultural foundation, however limited it was to the consideration of a single culture’s experience.

Especially in settings with increasing numbers of international students as institutions seek to expand their enrollments beyond national borders, curricula and pedagogies may need to be adapted to a wider array of cultural and linguistic differences (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2003). Wilson (2001) proposed there is simply not enough time in the highly diverse classroom “to bring forward examples that appeal to everyone’s interest and draw on everyone’s experiences” (p. 206). The instructor may have to rely on a limited set of options to illustrate a concept, based upon a limited knowledge of student interests, experiences, learning styles, abilities, and so on. This limitation may be mitigated through the use of a technology-enhanced environment, where “one need not restrict the number of examples or make often-unwarranted assumptions about the characteristics of the students” (p. 206).

While higher educators may devote an enormous amount of pedagogical effort to teaching the precise methods of science and rational thought, education may be served by

expending efforts to address the narrative realities of students' diverse perspectives and ways of living that occupy the bulk of their hours (Bruner, 1996). The benefits from advancing such cross-cultural fluency in the classroom may translate into valuable skills beyond the academic degree. The ability to find common terms and reference points, even in an attenuate form, is a "valuable asset in an increasingly global world. Corporate, nonprofit, and governmental leaders increasingly have no choice but to engage in multinational cooperative endeavors" (Keohane, 2001, p. 187). This is an especially important skill to develop in American students, where the perceived supremacy of the United States in scientific, economic, and military circles—along with the use of English as the global language and the international prestige of American universities and colleges—have "fueled the American tendency to believe that our own history, language, and culture are all that matter" (Engberg & Green, 2002, p. 7). To counter this, broad-visionary instructors should develop a multicultural perspective, continually striving to find common ground between diverse individuals, especially in the classroom.

A multicultural perspective permits disagreement without anyone necessarily being wrong. If culture in all its complexity is understood as an individual's attempt to navigate the river of life, then cultural differences can be understood simply as pragmatic acts of navigation and can be judged accordingly. (Cushner, McClelland, & Safford, 2000, p. 68)

The American models of learning may set a pattern for the rest of the world to follow, and we may retain prominence as the nation of choice for international students. However, "we cannot claim to have the best system of higher education in the world unless graduates can free themselves of ethnocentrism bred of ignorance and can navigate the difficult terrain of cultural complexity" (Engberg & Green, 2002, p. 7).

Ultimately, educators should be seeking for their students those transcendent moments, the *aha!* experience when a new concept is realized, a fresh perspective is born, a transforming flash of insight, “when the abstract word becomes flesh! I know that moment by the quality of the silence that pervades the room, whether it is filled with a thousand, a hundred, ten adults, or just two of us” (Vella, 2002, pp. 98-99). It is that unifying quality of pervading silence or effective cross-cultural discourse, which may be sought through the introduction of transculturally resonant themes and images in the international classroom.

#### Applying Themes and Images in the International Classroom

As noted above, Freire (1993) found significant success in applying themes and images that resonated with his Brazilian students, where after just 45 days, 300 workers in the city of Angicos had learned to read and write (Elias & Merriam, 1995, p. 146). Other researchers as well have found a successful application of images and themes in the classroom, in particular employing technologies allowing for presentations of video, graphics, and text (Loizos, 2002; Meskill & Swan, 1996; Meyer, 2002).

The use of images in the classroom may be especially useful for those international students who only speak elementary English, although their cognitive and intellectual skills may be highly developed as adults in their native language. Reacting as a child might without the verbal skills to fully respond to their environment, the international student may best relate to images rather than lecture and discussion:

Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognizes before it can speak. It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we

explain that world with words, but words can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it. (Berger, 1972, p. 7)

Meyer (2002) found that meaningful learning can be assisted through the use of images when students find a cognitive engagement through a combination of *verbal* and *pictorial* processes. Verbal modes of instruction include words spoken through lecture and discussion, while pictorial modes employ the use of “static graphics (such as photographs, illustrations, figures, and charts) and dynamic graphics (such as animation and video)” (pp. 61-62). The multimedia application of themes and images may also provide a tool where students might discover and develop meaning, employing the graphic media in a student-centered experience that can encourage discourse and empower critical thinking (Meskill & Swan, 1996).

Some media formats for the projection of themes and images may prove more effective than others. Loizos (2002) argued that it is a fallacy to believe that a static photograph is “universally accessible to everyone in the same way—that it operates transculturally, and without regard for social contexts, in such a way that everyone will both see and perceive the same content in the same photograph” (p. 96). Among the flaws in relying on still photographs to convey cross-cultural thematic experiences is that people insulated from the global economy may be unused to photographs while others may give a different meaning to the pictures according to their biographies (p. 96). However, this shortcoming found in static photographs to relay themes and images may be overcome in the classroom by employing richer video presentations instead.

Video has an obvious data recording function whenever some set of human actions is complex and difficult for a single observer to describe comprehensively while it unfolds. ... There are no obvious limits to the range of human actions and narratives that might be recorded, using image and sound together, on video film. (p. 103)

The use of video clips within PowerPoint presentations was the primary media format for presenting themes and images in the current study. How these clips were applied is detailed below and in the chapter 3 description of the study's methodology.

### Transcultural Study Methodology

This mixed qualitative grounded theory and quantitative method study incorporated methods of observation, interview, and measurement, examining student responses to a series of marketing messages that may or may not contain transculturally resonant themes and images. A group of participants for the study included students from numerous countries enrolled in global business courses with an international program through a California university. The student participants completed a simple assessment form as they responded to various international marketing messages and video clips containing a wide array of themes and images.

### *A Mixture of Methods*

To mitigate the researcher influences through a purely qualitative study, the study employed a mixed method approach, balancing the inexact though rich data of qualitative research with the precise yet reduced data of quantitative. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) provide a concise and cogent contrast between quantitative and qualitative methods. Though both models of research may involve similar scientific processes (e.g., hypothesis, experiment, conclusion), quantitative researchers seek to isolate a study's

variables with strict controls and precise analysis of research data, while qualitative researchers may often simply watch and ask, then end up with “tentative answers or hypotheses about what was observed” (p. 101). Glazer and Strauss (1967) wrote that in many instance both forms of data collection methods may be necessary, “not quantitative used to test qualitative, but both used as supplements, as mutual verification and, most important for us, as different forms of data on the same subject, which, when compared, will generate theory” (p. 18). Thus, quantitative and qualitative methods each offer their own value, and a strategic mixed-method of research may provide the best of both worlds: the richness of a qualitative experience, with the precision and replicability the quantitative research helps to ensure.

### *Qualitative Measures*

Studies of cultural interactions, by their very complex nature, are frequently served by a qualitative approach to understanding. The role of the observer in a qualitative study is irrevocable, where “all observation involves the observer’s participation in the world being studied” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 49). Patton (1990) wrote the “validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information-richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher than with sample size” (p. 185). Once the interview data have been collected, the possible methods for presenting the results and analysis are varied. Merriam (1998) observed how, despite applied techniques of qualitative data analysis, there is still “little doubt that the process is highly intuitive; a researcher cannot always explain where an insight (that may later be a finding) came



from or how relationships among data were detected” (p. 156). Glesne (1998) advised researchers to take preliminary data gathered through methods such as observational notes and interview transcripts, then put “like-minded pieces together into data clumps” to help create an organizational framework (p. 135).

The roots of the current study spring from a grounded theory research method (Cresswell, 1998; Leedy & Omrod, 2001), beginning with data gathered from informal interviews and observations within an international classroom, ending with a constructed theoretical model to be tested with a quantitative measurement tool. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) suggested qualitative researchers should “construct interpretive narratives from their data and try to capture the complexity of the phenomenon under study” (p. 103). A grounded theory approach places considerable onus on the researcher to present and interpret the study from a more subjective perspective, which Cresswell (1998) observed benefits from a “procedure that is thoroughly discussed and systematic,” as well as the necessity that the “language and feel of the article are scientific and objective while, at the same time, addressing a sensitive topic effusively” (p. 34). Using this approach, the current study included narrative describing the cultural concepts and categories of cross-cultural communication, a general background on the students (including data on nationality, gender, and age), as well as treatment of the marketing messages, themes, images, and so forth considered in the study. The research conclusions constructed “interpretive narratives from their data and (tried) to capture the complexity of the phenomenon under study,” as is requisite of effective qualitative researchers (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001, p. 103).

The statistical findings were rounded out with quoted comments from the students, gathered through informal interviews during the course discussions, adding deeper dimension to the quantitative data. Hatch (2002) suggested that informal interviews might serve well to allow participants to provide context and reflect on what they have already said or done within a study (p. 93), such as providing the participants a chance to elaborate on what a survey response means in greater depth.

The process of effective interviews is further complicated when the examination of various cultural dimensions become part of the process. Hofstede (1984) observed that “culture is to a human collectivity what personality is to an individual” (p. 21). Unraveling the cultural dimensions in a study can thus be as problematic as examining the multiple layers and dimensions of an individual’s personality and psychological underpinnings—an involved process based largely on trust between the interviewer and the interviewed. Prior to conducting effective cultural interviews, it may be necessary to convince the participants that it is okay and safe to talk about personal matters, no matter how ordinary they might seem; perhaps by seeking ways to establish to the interviewees that the researcher is “really not such an outsider after all” (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 172). In this study, I attempted to establish common ground with the international students by sharing examples of my own cross-cultural experiences and bewilderments abroad.

As this study involved students from a wide array of national cultures and language differences, the interview process posed a number of problems. These included the students’ use of ordinary English terms that may mean something else to them or not

fully convey their intended response within a limited English vocabulary. This may have caused them to omit detail that might be “difficult to put into words or appear to the respondent to be impolite or insensitive” (Gaskell, 2002, p. 44). To counter these limitations that may lead to invalid observations, a researcher should avoid taking a participant’s comments for granted at face value, interactively probing for more detail than may be offered on the participant’s first reply, and accumulating insights from sets of interviews spread across groups of respondents (p. 44). These steps and their application to the study are further described in chapter 3.

Because a qualitative study requires a greater degree of research participation in the data gathering, it may skew the data results through the researcher’s inadvertent biases or cues. Merriam (1998) referred to researcher participation in a study as a “schizophrenic activity,” where the researcher is a part of a study, yet disengaged enough to objectively observe and analyze the process. “It is a marginal position and personally difficult to sustain” (p. 103). In spite of the traditional research model where the scientific ideal calls for objectivity and detachment, where the qualitative researcher in a study is also the interviewer and the “primary instrument of data collection, subjectivity and interaction are assumed. The interdependency between the observer and the observed may bring about changes in both parties’ behaviors” (Merriam, 1998, pp. 103-104). While this may be unavoidable, simple acknowledgement of the dynamic may help to mitigate it some through conscious effort. It may be further mitigated by the introduction of quantitative methods.

### *Quantitative Measures*

Leedy and Ormrod (2001) observed that quantitative researchers “identify one or a few variables that they intend to study and then collect data specifically related to those variables” (p. 102). Quantitative research typically relies on descriptive statistics used to “summarize or describe the important characteristics of a set of data” (Triola, 2001, p. 34), measuring such characteristics of the data as *center*, *variation*, *distribution*, *outliers*, and *time*. There are several types of descriptive quantitative research: correlational, developmental, observation, and survey. These are good to use when the researcher wants to identify the characteristics of a phenomenon or find possible correlation between two or more phenomena. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) wrote, “The researcher . . . wants to determine the nature of how things are” (p. 210). Observing, interviewing, and sampling are ways of obtaining the data. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) stated that this type of research does not “involve changing or modifying the situation under investigation” (p. 191). Along with other forms of quantitative research, descriptive research offers objectivity, the advantage of working with numbers, and the potential for deduction (Ross & Chadwick, 1999). In addition, Ross and Chadwick pointed out that this type of study can be used “to develop theory, identify problems with current practice, make judgments or identify what others in similar situations may be doing” (p. 7).

The survey component of the study measured the reaction of students to video clips and images presented within the normal content of international business courses. Though the average class size may have been small (ranging from 10 to 20 students per class), the diversity of the students was wide, representing cultural extremes from nations

of Europe, Africa, South American, Eastern Europe, and Asia. Such cultural extremes allowed for a form of *maximum variation sampling*, a sampling strategy that may turn the weakness of a small sample into strength (Patton, 1990):

Any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest in value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared aspects are impacts of a program. How does one maximize variation in a small sample? One begins by identifying diverse characteristics or criteria for constructing the sample. (p. 172)

Glazer and Strauss (1967) observed that when researchers can maximize the differences within comparative groups, they may bring out the “widest possible coverage on ranges, continua, degrees, types, uniformities, variations, causes, conditions, consequences, probabilities of relationships, strategies, process, structural mechanisms, and so forth, all necessary for elaboration of the theory” (p. 57). This is further considered in chapter 3.

### Summary

This chapter reviewed literature relating to the research study, including the context of the globalizing educational environment calling for improved abilities to serve diverse international students, the nature and composition of international students, the forms of cultural variation, possible means of transcending cultural variation, and the qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to be applied. The application of the research methods to the study is further considered in chapter 3.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

### Introduction

As described in chapter 1, the problem this study addressed is that teachers in international courses are frequently not able to accommodate the wide range of cultural variations among a growing diversity of international students. The primary research question in the study is what sorts of themes and images might create a positive transcultural resonance within an international classroom comprised of diverse nationalities and cultural backgrounds? Key methodology questions addressed in this chapter include: What research method will best answer the research question in the context chosen for study? How valid was the study sample? How suitable was the study environment for reliable data gathering? How qualified was the researcher to conduct this study? How were the potentially transcultural themes and images evidenced in an international classroom?

This mixed qualitative grounded theory and quantitative method study examined student responses to a series of marketing message clips that may or may not have contained transculturally resonant themes and images. The participants in the study included students from numerous countries enrolled in global business courses through a California university's extension international program. The clips in the study were selected according to an ongoing qualitative consideration of international student reactions to various themes and images displayed over several years of course presentations. The

participants completed a simple quantitative assessment form as they responded to various international marketing messages and video clips containing a wide array of themes and images.

It is no simple prospect to examine the effective application of themes and images for enhanced teaching across multiple nationalities. It required a diverse group of international participants gathered over an extended period of time and comfortable enough in a cross-cultural setting to express viewpoints perhaps opposed to others in class; as well as consistent exposure to numerous images and themes; and an attentive researcher/observer who might make some theoretical assumptions.

These combined challenges may explain why an extensive literature review turned up so few references on the topic. This current study had a happy intersection of all three requirements: the diverse nationalities of students attending a university international program; exposure to hundreds of themes and images through video clips presented in global marketing and advertising courses; and a researcher trained and experienced in international broadcast production and journalistic observation, and professional expertise in cross-cultural public education. With more than 200 international students viewing more than 100 video clips each class, it provided a rich pool of more than 20,000 impressions on which to base the study.

Because this particular study on transcultural resonance was without identifiable precedent, the research methodology was unique to the study as well. Abiding by the policies of the Walden University Internal Review Board (IRB), the study research methodology was approved by the IRB and the administration of the hosting university

international program, and the participating students provided their consent as well. The students were free to decline participation without any adverse impact on their grades or standing, and their anonymity was assured, as provided in the student consent form (Appendix B).

## Setting and Sample

### *The Students*

Since 2001, more than 200 international students have taken my courses taught at an international extension program provided through a California university. These students have come from countries including Austria, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, China, Denmark, Ecuador, Germany, India, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Philippines, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Venezuela. The majority of students have come from Japan (30%), South Korea (23%), Turkey (11%), Brazil (9%), and Germany (7%). The students have been 55% female and 45% male; mostly in their early 20s through mid-30s. They are often college graduates or current students in their home country. They frequently stay for two or more quarters in the United States—not an inexpensive proposition in the California university’s city. They typically come from upper-income and well-placed families in their home countries.

### *The Courses*

The courses I have taught in international advertising, global marketing, and marketing communications were especially appropriate for laying the early foundations of this study. Over a single quarter, the participating international students may view 100 or



more television commercials and advertisements from around the world. Though certain forms of images presented in the classroom (such as paintings and photographs) may fail to operate transculturally and without regard for social contexts (Loizos, 2002, p. 96), a benefit of using commercials and other advertisements is that they provide a near-globally recognizable and familiar medium (Mueller, 1996, p. 10). Television commercials and most other forms of advertisement are efficient quantum packets of communication; demographically resonant and necessarily concise. They are commonly accepted, practical expressions of relevant life situations and themes.

### *The Researcher*

I have a professional background working with video images and themes in international settings. I was employed as a reporter, anchor, bureau chief, and producer in local and international television news from 1986 through 2000, responsible for selecting video clips to support diverse storylines. My international media experience also included 5 years as a journalist and television producer in Eastern Europe (Russia and Ukraine). I spent 4 years in management for a mass-media public education program in Ukraine, developing television, radio and print campaigns targeting a national Ukrainian audience as well as diverse subcultures within the Ukrainian population. While based in Ukraine, I also completed a master's degree in business communications, with an emphasis on cross-cultural management. I have taught international university students since 2001, in courses including international advertising, global marketing, marketing communications, and global economics.

Though it may prove difficult for a researcher to objectively distance her or him self as an active participant in a study (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998), I sought to mitigate the subjectivity through the application of an objective measurement tool, as described in the quantitative research design section ahead. Furthermore, any personal observations apart from the direct quotation of participant comments or application of descriptive data were identified as such. Additional steps to minimize subjective predispositions and biases are addressed in the quantitative design section below.

### Qualitative Seeds of the Study

The roots of the current study sprung from a grounded theory research method (Cresswell, 1998; Leedy & Omrod, 2001), beginning with data gathered from informal interviews and observations within an international classroom, and ending with a constructed theoretical model to be tested with a quantitative measurement tool. As considered above in chapter 2, a grounded theory approach places considerable onus on the researcher to present and interpret the study from a more subjective perspective, which requires a “procedure that is thoroughly discussed and systematic,” as well as a necessity that the “language and feel of the article are scientific and objective while, at the same time, addressing a sensitive topic effusively” (Cresswell, 1998, p. 34). Furthermore, the study was grounded in a form of *action research*, with a rich tradition in educational settings (Hatch, 2002). Action research is typically undertaken “for the sake of investigating practice, usually in concert with those working on the front lines, and improving that practice based on what is discovered” (p. 31). Action researchers may seek to identify a problem through observation and sometimes a collection of quantitative data,

and define possible methods to address that problem with practical tools and experience (p. 31).

The participating international students were advanced English students enrolled in business courses that are to approximate as closely as possible the experience they will face once they take regular university courses, while still however accommodating their diverse language needs and cultural adjustments. During classroom sessions, international students may tend to sit in small groups of nationality (from one to five students per seating group, depending upon the size of the class and the national mix): Turks with the Turks, Koreans with their own, Japanese with their own, Brazilians with other Brazilians, and so forth. It is common for the students to interact within their groups during the playing of video clips, communicating among their own cultural group when a clip in particular interests them along linguistic or cultural lines. A transcultural response to a displayed video clip or image may be evidenced when discussions among students go beyond their group seating. A positive transcultural resonance to a presented image and/or theme may be demonstrated when the cross-group discussion is energetic, upbeat, laughing; a cross-culture dissonance may be evidenced when the discussions turn confrontational and argumentative between seating groups. Other indicators of student response to themes and images that transcend cultural differences may include: (a) entire class focus on the screen projection in an intense and unified manner, (b) unified and attentive silence, (c) unified laughter, (d) unified chatter, and (e) cross-cultural comments and questions within and outside of class to particular themes and images.

Over repeated courses with more than 200 students viewing more than 100 video clips each, I had observed student reaction to more than 20,000 impressions, and gained further insights through student comments on why they may have reacted in certain ways to the presented themes and images. Throughout the observations, student comments, and review of their course assignments (such as student final projects analyzing international advertising message development), I began to theorize categorical groupings for the themes and images that elicited and encompassed the classroom responses described above. Research protocol prohibited a detailing of specific data gathered over this period (i.e., the informal and ongoing information gathering was done prior to IRB review and prior to obtaining student consent), however some general observations on the topic groupings may be cited. These central topic groups include humor, sex, religion, and nationalism—mostly evident because of the heated arguments and classroom dissonance those topics may evoke.

Central topic categories that appeared to generate more harmonious discussions involved themes and images such as animals, relationships, babies, sports, water, life cycles, and self image. These last three topics may need just a few more words of expansion. A common experience among my international students at this coastal university is their attraction to the Pacific Ocean stretching along the campus shoreline. They show a similar response to advertising clips that include some sort of water imagery, perhaps echoing Herman Melville's line in *Moby Dick* about water: "There is a magic in it. Stand a man on his legs, set his feet a-going, and he will infallibly lead you to water, if water there be. As everyone knows, meditation and water are wedded for ever."

The thematic grouping of *life cycles* reflects the fundamental and commonly shared human process. We all are born, live, and die—the rest is just details (a line that usually gets a laugh from the class). The grouping of *self image* has more to do with our curiosity over how others see themselves, rather than a focus on our own image. We may not understand another human or group, and we may not even want to be like them, but we still are intrigued by their own self image. This dynamic, beyond some selected video clips, is also evident during one of the popular sessions with students in a presentation on flags and national anthems from around the world.

Based on repeated observations of students' reactions to particular images and themes within these general groupings, I selected a collection of clips for the study. The goal was to attempt a measure of which themes and images may best create a positive resonance—a sympathetic vibration in the room. Some themes and images may create a negative resonance, or a discordant dissonance disrupting the educational flow, or may simply incur an indifferent boredom; so it is useful to identify those as well.

### Quantitative Research Design

#### *The Sample*

The group of participants for the quantitative study included university students from diverse countries enrolled in several of my global business courses with the university international program during the academic years 2004-2005, for a total unduplicated participant sample of 47 students. This grouping of participants may be considered a convenience sample as they were readily accessible and enrolled in courses in which the images and themes were both presented as subject matter and examined as part of the

current study. However, this selection of participants was also more than a simple convenience sample; this sample was not only representative but indeed was the bulk of the advanced population of the university's international program. After participation in a series of smaller groups based on particular language levels and needs, the students were promoted to the advanced language program, with a requirement that they take an elective course presented in English at a level appropriate to regular university studies. I was hired to teach those courses; one in international advertising, and another in global economics. The class size of the students in the individualized language courses prior to the elective course would have a range of six to nine students per class. In the combined advanced elective courses, the student count could be two or three times that size (typically 18 students). The students in these elective courses are not only representative and substantially inclusive of the diversity of international students in the advanced language program, but are also representative of the population of international students studying throughout the United States; a preponderance of the students from Asia, with strong representation from Europe, and developing southern nations (OECD, 2003).

Though the average class size may have been small (ranging from 10 to 20 students per class), the diversity of the students was wide, typically representing vast cultural differences from nations of Europe, Africa, South American, Eastern Europe, and Asia. Such cultural extremes allowed for a form of *maximum variation sampling*, a sampling strategy that may turn the weakness of a small sample into strength (Patton, 1990). Glazer and Strauss (1967) observed that when researchers can maximize the differences within comparative groups, they may bring out the "widest possible coverage on ranges, continua,

degrees, types, uniformities, variations, causes, conditions, consequences, probabilities of relationships, strategies, process, structural mechanisms, and so forth, all necessary for elaboration of the theory” (p. 57).

### *The Presentation*

The student participants completed a simple assessment form as they observed a PowerPoint presentation, responding to various international marketing messages and video clips containing an array of themes and images. The presented clips are described in Appendix C. The students were instructed to refrain from talking or laughing or other such expression during the presentation and survey, to avoid a *diffusion effect* of opinions (Glesne, 1998, p. 171). The students were also informed of their rights to decline participation in the study without any adverse affect on their grade or position in the course, and each participant signed a form providing consent to the study (Appendix B).

These clips were presented to the study participants as part of the regular context of materials within the course during normally scheduled class hours. While it may provide better researcher controls to hold a presentation session apart from the regular class, that would have required a considerably higher degree of voluntary student participation, and could serve better as a study of cultural proclivity to volunteer, rather than serving the study at hand. Furthermore, the study sought to address the applicability of themes and images within regular class sessions with all the related factors and influences, so assessing the effectiveness of the presentation within a regular class session may have been more appropriate.

The complexity of the themes and images contained within the presented multimedia video clips also posed methodological problems in isolating participant reactions to specific themes. However, as considered in chapter 2, less complex static photographs provide an inferior means for assessing and bridging cultural diversities, which may better be addressed by employing richer though more complex video images enhanced by audio narratives (Loizos, 2002, p. 103). As also considered in chapter 2, the ability to measure reactions to presented themes and images across cultures—such as photographs of facial expressions—may be subject to a confounding assortment of variables (Ekton, 1999; Watson, 2004 ). However, as the chapter 5 conclusions propose methods that may apply transculturally resonant themes in international classroom settings—themes which are unavoidably complex with sub-themes and overtones—the study methodology attempted to address that challenge to the best extent possible. Methods to mitigate the influence of confounding factors in the assessment of participant reactions are further described in the study validity section below.

#### *Measurement Instrument Reliability*

The measurement instrument employed a simple 7-point summated scale, on a multi-page form where participants rated their reactions to an assortment of video clips and images projected through a PowerPoint presentation. The instrument response choices ranged from *strongly dislike* to *strongly like*, with a *no opinion* option at the midpoint (Appendix A). The simplicity of the form and process measuring participant reaction to the clips helped to protect against linguistic problems, and offered a sufficient range of options to provide a fine resolution for the measurement of variations. The selection of a 7-point



Likert-type scale was supported in the earliest works by Pemberton (1933), where test reliability was found to achieve a maximum at seven intervals, but decreased in reliability with additional intervals. Likert (1932) himself did not consider the number of choices on a scale to be a critical issue, and left it “implied that the actual number of choices may be left to the tastes of individual researchers. In practice researchers often do assign the number of choices arbitrarily according to personal taste or past convention” (Munshi, 1990).

The measurement instrument for this study was tested for reliability. Though a pilot study test of the instrument found a 6% drop in the average raw rating and a 33% increase in the average variance between the written and oral participant responses—perhaps due in part to participant fatigue—there was no significant net change in the response classification as determined by the formulae described below, indicating an acceptable reliability of the instrument for the purpose of this study. Further consideration of the instrument reliability test is detailed in the pilot study section of this chapter.

### *Study Validity*

This study applied sufficient controls to help ensure the research findings and conclusions were warranted by the data, as required by the precepts of research validity (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001, p. 105). Among the controls, the research methodology included informal follow-up interviews during regular class sessions conducted once the written survey had been administered. Open-ended interview questions sought further description of the students’ reaction to the presented themes and images, probing for insights into the aspects of the themes and images that may contribute to transcultural resonance or dissonance. These interview questions included, what did you think of this video clip? Was

there something you especially liked? Was there something you did not like? Did your opinion of the advertised product affect your impression? The interviews also questioned where sub-themes or other incidental factors (such as the music selection, cast of characters, or even a dog breed) may have influenced or subverted the participants' reaction to a primary theme, as further considered below in the section on data analysis. Excerpted student comments were used to illustrate these influences as warranted. The informal interviews were conducted as part of the normal classroom group activities, rather than relying on more structured one-on-one interviews that may have required a higher level of student volunteer participation. Such a circumstance in one-on-one interviews could become more a measure of a cultural proclivity to volunteer, rather than an assessment of transcultural response. These interviews were recorded and digitally stored, gathering additional detail on students' reaction to the presented themes and images.

Another consideration in the interview process was that because international students frequently have limited English skills, it required a higher degree of researcher interactivity during the interviews (Gaskell, 2002, p. 44). To minimize researcher influence, I attempted to probe though not lead the participant responses, helping the respondents to speak in their own voice while addressing the topic at hand, through an interview exchange that was engaged though objective as possible. As necessary, I may have rephrased a participant's response for clarity, and asked the participant to confirm that rephrasing was what he or she intended to say.

To further ensure the study's validity, the research methodology combined an assortment of clips within the central group headings to mitigate the influences of sub-

themes and other skewing factors. The selection of clips throughout the study was slightly modified as follow-up interviews indicated sub-themes or other incidental factors were significantly imposing upon the impact and measurement of the clip's central theme. These modifications are detailed in the chapter 4 analyses of results.

### *Data Analysis*

The goal of this study was determine what themes and images might evoke positive resonance in an international classroom, which may allow for an engaged and supportive exchange of ideas in a transcultural spirit. The presented video clips within the study were rated according to their levels of negative, neutral, and positive reactions combined with the degree of resonance and dissonance in each instance. The data analyses included descriptive analyses assessing the magnitude of differences in participant reaction, a significance test of the study results, and qualitative detail elaborating on the collected quantitative data. All descriptive statistics in the analyses as detailed below were rounded to the nearest tenth, unless by rounding up or down the central group ranking would be moved into a different category—a circumstance that did not occur.

Each clip presented in the survey, though categorized according to a primary theme, typically and unavoidably also contained one or more sub-themes. For example, a primary theme of relationships may contain a sub-theme of sexuality, which could skew the participant assessment of the primary theme. To mitigate skewed responses to a mix of sub-themes within any clip, the data analysis combined a minimum of three clips within a thematic grouping (e.g., the humor group, nationalism group, life cycles group, water group, and so on), so high and/or low outlying variations attributable to sub-themes might

be mitigated between the clips. Thus, for the thematically grouped clips, the number of sample responses ( $n$ ) encompassed the total data for the subgroupings of clips combined. These groupings and composite clips are described in Appendix C.

The classification formulae described below relied on a data mean for determining negative and positive reactions to a clip. However, the data analysis also included a median analysis to identify possible skewing of the data by participant response outliers. Some of the participants in a pilot study admitted to ranking a particular response to a clip at an extreme, for reasons that had little to do with the theme or image itself. For example, one student did not like the particular breed of dog in the clip; another student simply did not like a clip's music score. Instructors may need to acknowledge such outliers in the classroom because they are common fixtures, and just one extreme viewpoint might shift the character of the class.

Furthermore, the analysis of study findings in chapter 4 included a significance test (Bulmer, 1979; Triola, 2001) to help ensure external validity to the study and consider the extent to which the findings and conclusions might be generalized and applied to other contexts (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001, p. 105). The significance test used a null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) that the student response demonstrated no reaction other than a neutral response (i.e., a mean of 4 on the survey instrument's 7-point scale). The alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) held that the student response provided a non-neutral reaction.

### *Classification Formulae*

The aim of the classification formulae was to help identify which themes and images may help to evoke a positive resonance within international and culturally diverse

classrooms. The classification of clips was a combination of two factors: one, rating a clip's positive, neutral or negative impression on the group; the other factor, assessing the level of resonance or dissonance the clip evoked within the group. To ensure a clear division between negative, neutral, and positive reactions, a 1-point range on either side of the 7-point scale's mid-point of 4 quantified a neutral response. Group responses with a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) greater than or equal to ( $\geq$ ) 5 were classified as positive; those less than or equal to ( $\leq$ ) 3 were classified as negative. Thus:

Positive:  $\bar{x} \geq 5$   
 Neutral:  $3 < \bar{x} < 5$   
 Negative:  $\bar{x} \leq 3$

To ensure a conservative division between classifications of resonance or dissonance, the study employed a variance (VAR or  $s^2$ ) of greater than or equal to 3, to indicate a dissonance. A reaction with a variance less than 3 indicated a resonance, whether that resonance related to a generally positive, neutral, or negative reaction to the clip. This scale enabled a definitive distinction, allowing for clear delineation of dissonance, but provided yet an accommodating margin of disagreement within a resonant category. Thus:

Dissonance:  $\text{VAR} \geq 3$   
 Resonance:  $\text{VAR} < 3$

The aim of this study was to identify themes and images within clips that may evoke a positive resonance in the classroom. The possible combinations of the two factors described above gave a number of possible combinations (the sought-after positive resonance, as well as positive dissonance, neutral resonance, neutral dissonance, negative resonance, and negative dissonance). Thus:

$\bar{x} \geq 5$  with  $VAR < 3$  indicated a Positive Resonance

$\bar{x} \geq 5$  with  $VAR \geq 3$  indicated a Positive Dissonance

$\bar{x} > 3$  but  $< 5$  with  $VAR < 3$  indicated a Neutral Resonance

$\bar{x} > 3$  but  $< 5$  with  $VAR \geq 3$  indicated a Neutral Dissonance

$\bar{x} \leq 3$  with  $VAR < 3$  indicated a Negative Resonance

$\bar{x} \leq 3$  with  $VAR \geq 3$  indicated a Negative Dissonance

The descriptive analyses of the survey data also included a sum of the seven-point scale responses ( $\sum x$ ), providing a raw rating of the clip. A maximum clip rating was the number of responses ( $n$ ) multiplied by 7, the score at the high end of the scale. A relatively high rating with a high variance indicated positive dissonance; a low rating with a high variance indicated a negative dissonance. A high rating with a low variance indicated a positive resonance.

The subgrouped clips were randomized on the measurement instrument to mitigate data skews possibly caused by initial responses with no comparative context, sub-group overlap, and participant fatigue. The measurement analysis provided descriptive data including median, mean, variance, and raw score, as well as the clip classification the analyses indicated. The individual clip analyses were aggregated for the respective thematic group score. As described above, the analyses of study findings also included a two-tailed hypothesis test considering the significance of the study results, supporting the extent to which the findings and conclusions might be generalized and applied to other contexts, as further detailed in chapter 4. Individual subgroup clip descriptive analyses are in Appendix D. An overall summary of the thematic group comparisons are in Appendix E.

## Pilot Study Results

### *Introduction*

A pilot study was conducted to determine the reliability of the research methodology and survey instrument. The participant group for the pilot study was comprised of ten international students, representing countries including South Korea, Japan, Turkey, Germany, and Austria. The survey instrument employed a simple 7-point summated scale, on a multi-page form where participants rated their reactions to an initial selection of 22 video clips and images projected through a PowerPoint presentation. The entire survey procedure administered on October 22, 2004 took about 20 minutes, including 5 minutes explaining the procedures and student rights while gathering their consent forms. Every student in the class consented to participate. The students were instructed to refrain from talking or laughing or other such expression during the presentation and survey, to avoid a *diffusion effect* of opinions (Glesne, 1998, p. 171). The presentation took another 15 minutes to display the 22 clips in the PowerPoint show (2 clips from each of 11 categorical groupings).

### *Participant Response*

Immediately following the survey and collection of forms, after a short break, a follow-up discussion and oral survey of the students was conducted to ensure the oral responses coincided with the written survey forms, and to discern whatever procedural confusion may have existed, or glean whatever improvements might be made in the process. The students expressed no problems with any aspect of the survey process and the survey instrument.

### *Instrument Reliability*

I conducted a follow-up oral survey on six of the previously presented clips using the same 7-point scale as the written survey, to compare and ensure that the students' written responses on the survey instrument was a reliable representation of their intent, and that they clearly understood the survey instructions. After the survey was completed and collected, the students were asked to again rank their reactions to six selected clips by a show of their hands. The pilot study test of the instrument found a 6% drop in the average raw rating and a 33% increase in the average variance between the written and oral participant responses. However, the comparison of oral and written responses coincided in general categorical rankings (for example, *positive resonance*, *positive dissonance*, *neutral resonance*, and so forth), except for one instance out of the six selected clips. This difference between written and oral responses may be attributable to the fatigue setting in about 45 minutes into the class, as well as what one student suggested: "The first time looking at the commercial was interesting; the second time I just wanted it to end."

Appendix F contrasts the differences between the written and oral survey results. Except for the modest lower oral ranking of the clips and the larger variance, the comparison and consistency of classifications between selected written and orally rated clips indicated the simple survey instrument was reliable.

In addition, a follow-up informal interview was conducted and recorded gathering additional detail on students' reaction to the presented themes and images. Excerpts from these comments are included in the chapter 4 dissertation analysis of results, along with data gathered from additional participant surveys, to further enhance the validity of the study.



*Modifications*

There were several student suggestions and researcher observations incorporated into a second survey conducted in the following class session on October 25, 2004. The participant consensus was that the first survey with 22 clips and running 20 minutes long could have been extended by another 10 minutes and 10 clips, with no adverse impact on the participants from fatigue. Furthermore, one student suggested that his rating of clips may have been skewed up front until he found a comparison level for ranking ensuing clips. Another student suggested it would have been easier to mark the form if there were clearer divisions between the numbered response lines. The modified survey instrument was 11 questions long, with clearer delineations between response lines, and future surveys toward the research had clip categories shuffled to help mitigate answer skews or duration fatigue. The participants expressed general satisfaction with the survey instrument improvements and the overall process. The results from the first and second surveys were combined for the data analyses.

Furthermore, the pilot study relied on an analysis of the data median in the formulae classifying the participant reaction to the presented clips. To ensure against possible misleading or skewing in comparing a data median with the variance results calculated around a mean, the classification of clips in the current study employed a formula based on an analysis of the data mean, as described above.

*Preliminary Findings*

The pilot study indicated a positive resonance to the group categories of babies, animals, relationships, sports, self image, life cycles, and water; and neutral or dissonant reactions to group categories of humor, sex, religion, and nationalism (Appendix G). These preliminary findings were incorporated with the study results in chapter 4.

*Summary*

The research methodology for the study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods to identify and measure images and themes that may transcend cultural variations. The thematic and image groupings were grounded in observations gleaned over 4 years when teaching a series of business courses for international students. The group categories for the study included samples of clips within subject headings of humor, sex, religion, nationalism, babies, animals, relationships, sports, self image, life cycles, and water. The study instrument measured students' reactions to images and themes presented within PowerPoint presentations as part of the regular content within student coursework. Additional student response augmenting the measurements was gathered through informal interviews following the survey measurement. A pilot study provided evidence of reliability for the measurement instrument, and indicated a positive resonance to the group categories of babies, animals, relationships, sports, self image, life cycles, and water; and neutral or dissonant reactions to group categories of humor, sex, religion, and nationalism.

## CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Introduction

The primary research question addressed in this study was what sorts of themes and images might create a positive transcultural resonance within an international classroom comprised of diverse nationalities and cultural backgrounds? Based on the methodology described in chapter 3 and further detailed below, the research data from this study indicate that certain themes and images may indeed evoke a positive transcultural resonance. These include babies, animals, relationships, sports, self image, and life cycles. Themes and images that evoke a negative dissonance or a neutral reaction were examined as well, since international instructors may need to consider those factors in course design. Those themes and images include religion, sex, humor, and nationalism. Overall summaries of the group comparisons are in Appendix E.

### The Sample

The group of participants for the study included university students from diverse countries enrolled in several of my global business courses with a university international extension program during the academic years 2004-2005. As detailed in chapter 3, this selection of participants was more than a simple convenience sample; the sample was not only representative but indeed a substantial bulk of the population of the university's advanced international program. A total of 47 students participated in the study, representing 11 countries (18 from South Korea, 8 from Japan, 7 from Turkey, 5 from Brazil, 2 from Germany, 2 from Sweden, and 1 each from Austria, Norway, Switzerland, Taiwan, and Ukraine). The participants were 55% female (26) and 45% male (21). The

participants' average age was 25, and they had each been in the United States for an average of 18 weeks.

The diversity of the international students in the sample represented sizeable cultural differences from nations within Europe, South American, Eastern Europe, and Asia. Such cultural extremes allowed for a form of *maximum variation sampling* (Patton, 1990). Glazer and Strauss (1967) observed that when researchers can maximize the differences within comparative groups, they may bring out the “widest possible coverage on ranges, continua, degrees, types, uniformities, variations, causes, conditions, consequences, probabilities of relationships, strategies, process, structural mechanisms, and so forth, all necessary for elaboration of the theory” (p. 57).

### Research Method and Analyses

As described in chapter 3, the students viewed video clips and rated their opinions on a simple 7-point measurement instrument. The instrument response choices ranged from *strongly dislike* to *strongly like*, with a *no opinion* option at the midpoint (Appendix A). The simplicity of the form helped to protect against linguistic problems, and offered a sufficient range of options to provide a fine resolution for the measurement of variations. The instrument was tested and found reliable in a pilot study, as described above. The survey was conducted over five sessions ranging from October of 2004 through May of 2005. Each survey session lasted approximately 30 minutes, followed by short break then a 45 minute period of informal interviews. Each participant assessed about 33 clips on the survey instrument (Appendix A), with additional clips added or exchanged as warranted and described below.

The data analyses included consideration of the magnitude of the range and variance in data, the significance of the results, and qualitative measures augmenting the quantitative data gathered. These findings are described within this section, as well as within assessment of each individual thematic group category below. After consideration of the magnitude, significance, and qualitative elaboration of the results, the specific findings will be detailed regarding instances of negative, neutral, and dissonant themes and images, as well as the transculturally positive and resonant themes and images.

### *Magnitude and Classification of Results*

As described in chapter 3, a classification formula was designed to help identify which themes and images may evoke a positive resonance within international and culturally diverse classrooms. The classification of clips combined two factors: one, rating a clip's positive, neutral or negative impression on the group; the other factor, assessing the level of resonance or dissonance the clip evoked within the group. To ensure a clear division between negative, neutral, and positive reactions, a one-point range on either side of the 7-point scale's mid-point of 4 quantified a neutral response. Group responses with a mean ( $\bar{x}$ ) greater than or equal to ( $\geq$ ) 5 was classified as positive; those less than or equal to ( $\leq$ ) 3 was classified as negative. Thus:

Positive:  $\bar{x} \geq 5$   
 Neutral:  $3 < \bar{x} < 5$   
 Negative:  $\bar{x} \leq 3$

To ensure a conservative division between classifications of resonance or dissonance, the study employed a variance (VAR or  $s^2$ ) of greater than or equal to 3, to indicate a dissonance. A reaction with a variance less than 3 indicated a resonance, whether

that resonance related to a generally positive, neutral, or negative reaction to the clip. This scale enabled a definitive distinction, allowing for clear delineation of dissonance, but provided yet an accommodating margin of disagreement within a resonant category. Thus:

Dissonance:  $VAR \geq 3$   
 Resonance:  $VAR < 3$

The aim of this study was to identify themes and images within clips that may evoke a positive resonance in the classroom. The possible combinations of the two factors described above provided a number of possible combinations (the desirable positive resonance, as well as positive dissonance, neutral resonance, neutral dissonance, negative resonance, and negative dissonance). Thus:

$\bar{x} \geq 5$  with  $VAR < 3$  indicated a Positive Resonance  
 $\bar{x} \geq 5$  with  $VAR \geq 3$  indicated a Positive Dissonance  
  
 $\bar{x} > 3$  but  $< 5$  with  $VAR < 3$  indicated a Neutral Resonance  
 $\bar{x} > 3$  but  $< 5$  with  $VAR \geq 3$  indicated a Neutral Dissonance  
  
 $\bar{x} \leq 3$  with  $VAR < 3$  indicated a Negative Resonance  
 $\bar{x} \leq 3$  with  $VAR \geq 3$  indicated a Negative Dissonance

The descriptive analyses of the survey data also included a sum of the 7-point scale responses ( $\sum x$ ), providing a raw rating of the clip. A maximum clip rating was the number of responses ( $n$ ) multiplied by 7, the score at the high end of the scale.

The sub-grouped clips were randomized on the measurement instrument to mitigate data skews possibly caused by initial responses with no comparative context, sub-group overlap, and participant fatigue. The measurement analysis provided descriptive data including median, mean, variance, and raw score, as well as the clip classification the

analyses indicate. The individual clip analyses were aggregated for the respective thematic group score.

### *Significance of Results*

The analyses of study findings also included a two-tailed hypothesis test (Triola, 2001) assessing the significance ( $p$ ) of the study results. This test was useful in determining the extent to which the study findings and conclusions might be generalized and applied to other contexts (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). The significance test used a null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) that the participant response demonstrated a neutral reaction to the presented clips (i.e., a mean of 4 on the survey instrument's 7-point scale). The alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) held that the participant response demonstrated a non-neutral (positive or negative) reaction to the presented clips. Descriptive analyses were used to assess the magnitude and variance of the reactions. Using a conservative significance level ( $\alpha = .01$ ), each central thematic grouping displayed a degree of significance rejecting the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) as demonstrated below within the central group descriptive analyses. This supported the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) that the data indicated a non-neutral reaction applicable to a larger population. However, two clips within the subgroup categories failed a level of significance toward rejection of the null hypothesis, as detailed in the subgroup analysis descriptions in Appendix D ("Love Kiss" and "Happy Cow"). This was due in part to the smaller sample size within the composite subgroups ( $n < 30$ ), as opposed to the larger sample size under the aggregated group headings ( $n > 30$ ).

### *Qualitative Elaboration*

Finally, the analysis of the data also included brief comments gleaned from informal participant interviews to expand upon the quantitative data. Glazer and Strauss (1967) advised that in many instances both forms of data collection methods may be necessary, “not quantitative used to test qualitative, but both used as supplements, as mutual verification and, most important for us, as different forms of data on the same subject, which, when compared, will generate theory” (p. 18). Hatch (2002) suggested that informal interviews might serve well to allow participants to provide context and reflect on what they have already said or done within a study (p. 93), such as providing the participants a chance to elaborate on what a survey response means in greater depth.

The surveys and interviews were held several sessions into a course, after having better developed an essential trust relationship between the instructor and the students, as well as among themselves (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). This enhanced trust relationship with the instructor encouraged the participants to speak critically, especially participants from those high power distance cultures where students may be discouraged from speaking their own opinions (Calloway-Thomas, Cooper, & Blake, 1999).

The qualitative interviews posed both challenges and benefits in using non-native English speakers for this study. Frequently the participants’ English language skills were not sufficient to provide more sophisticated insights into their reactions to the clips even though the students may be high performers in their native countries and languages (Gaskell, 2002), and what insights were gleaned often took active prodding by the researcher. On the other hand, the succinct responses were typically clear and



unambiguous, as the participating students usually responded in very broad terms without the language skills to get delve into complicated subtleties. These broad terms benefited the study, as the resonant themes could be better assessed with interviews not derailed by confounding minutia and excessive subjectivity (Merriam, 1998).

#### Dissonant / Negative / Neutral Themes and Images

The following group categories were identified as dissonant, or resonantly negative or neutral, according to the analysis algorithm as defined above. While themes and images that might evoke culturally dissonant or negative reactions may not necessarily be precluded from use in international classrooms—especially as they may be valuable in stimulating discussion and debate—they might nonetheless be approached cautiously, with an understanding the related topics may especially generate animosities and dissonance between cultures.

#### *Humor*

The survey data in Table 1 demonstrate a neutral participant reaction to the collection of humor clips ( $\bar{x} = 4.5$ ), compounded however by a relative high level of dissonance ( $VAR = 3.3$ ). According to the data analysis algorithm, these results classify the humor category with neutral dissonance.

Table 1  
*Humor Group Descriptive Analysis*

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Group Classification: Neutral Dissonance
$n = 235$
$\bar{x} = 4.5$
Median = 5.0
VAR = 3.3
$\Sigma x = 1060$
$p < .001$

---

To ensure broader national representation in the analysis of applied humor, the humor group survey was comprised of a larger selection of component clips than the other group categories (five clips instead three), including clip titles of “Fish Love” (Singapore), “Whassup” (U.S.A.), “Love Kiss” (Russia), “The Haka” (Belgium), and “Proof” (U.K.). These clips are described in Appendix C. Humor may not correctly be considered a theme in itself, but rather the contextual application of a theme. For example, the sexually-themed humor in “Proof” did not rate well across cultures in the survey ( $\bar{x} = 3.9$ ; VAR = 2.1), while the resonant relationship theme within the humorous “Fish Love” clip scored higher with the international participants ( $\bar{x} = 5.6$ ; VAR = 1.7). Individual subgroup analyses within the humor group clip are detailed in Appendix D.

An instructor of international students may find vast differences in what various nationalities and cultures find funny (e.g., Asian humor may be based on life anecdotes; Russian humor may be grounded in historical and political affairs; American humor may be a little raunchy). So while humor may serve well when directed toward a specific demographic group with appropriate cultural context, humor misapplied across cultures

may create a dissonance in the classroom. One student from Taiwan commented that she “understood the words, but not the thinking” behind American humor. Another student observed a danger in using humor since “sometimes people might think you are laughing at them” if one laughs at a joke or a funny situation from someone else’s culture.

### *Nationalism*

The survey data in Table 2 demonstrate a neutral participant reaction to the collection of nationalism clips ( $\bar{x} = 4.7$ ), with an overall level of dissonance ( $VAR = 3.3$ ). According to the data analysis algorithm, these results classify the nationalism category as neutral dissonance. Nationalism subgroup clip descriptive data analyses are in Appendix D.

Table 2  
*Nationalism Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Neutral Dissonance
$n = 141$
$\bar{x} = 4.7$
Median = 5.0
$VAR = 3.4$
$\sum x = 667$
$p < .001$

The nationalism group was comprised of clips providing adamant statements and displays of nationalistic patriotism. The component clips included titles “The Haka” (Belgium), “I Am American” (U.S.A.), and “I Am Canadian” (Canada). The clips are described in Appendix C. The participants expressed special sensitivity to nationalistic positions, as capably summed up by one student: “You can get in a lot of trouble by

celebrating your own nationality to others, when people are so different in their own celebrations.” Other students expressed a general aversion to “bad stereotypes” as can be perpetuated by nationalistic posturing. One of the largest variances ( $VAR = 3.9$ ) in the study—signifying a relatively high degree of dissonance—was toward the clip, “I Am an American” with various races of Americans repeating the title phrase throughout the clip. Some students expressed weariness with the nationalistic point: “It was annoying, the repeating of I’m American—American, American, American”; while others found the diversity of America an interesting counterpoint to their frequently homogenous cultures: “They’re all kind of different, but they’re still American.”

### *Sex*

The survey data in Table 3 demonstrate a neutral participant reaction to the collection of sex group clips ( $\bar{x} = 4.5$ ), with a resonant agreement toward the neutrality ( $VAR = 2.3$ ). According to the data analysis algorithm, these results classify the sex category as neutral resonance. This classification compares with the religion group below—though not necessarily evoking a negative or dissonant reaction such as the humor and nationalism groups above—as a theme that may not successfully engage a positive and resonant international exchange in the classroom.

Table 3  
*Sex Group Descriptive Analysis*

---

Group Classification: Neutral Resonance
$n = 141$
$\bar{x} = 4.5$
Median = 5.0
VAR = 2.3
$\Sigma x = 632$
$p < .001$

---

Sex within advertisements is a consistent theme, yet the continuum of sexual tone within the presented clips ranged from muted to blatant, affecting the student reactions. Sex subgroup clip descriptive data analyses are in Appendix D. The presented clips within the sex group included “Headache” (Brazil), “Proof” (U.K.), and “Quick Soup” (U.K.), as individually described in Appendix C. International students often exhibit profound cultural differences in what is considered appropriate for sexually themed clips and images. The Asian students and the students from Islamic Turkey expressed the greatest discomfort with the sexual themes: “It’s very different from what we see in Korea”; and “We wouldn’t see such ads in Turkey.” Other students expressed interest in the sexual themes and even requested repeat showings. However, the most vocal participant reactions included comments such as “Some sexy commercials make the woman look like an object. I don’t like that” (Brazilian woman); “It’s offensive to men as well as women” (German male); and some countries make sex look “too easy—like they don’t respect it very much” (Taiwanese woman).

### *Religion*

The survey data in Table 4 demonstrate a neutral participant reaction to the collection of religion group clips ( $\bar{x} = 4.1$ ), with a resonant agreement toward the neutrality ( $VAR = 2.3$ ). According to the data analysis algorithm, these results classify the religion category as neutral resonance. Religion subgroup clip descriptive data analyses are in Appendix D.

Table 4  
*Religion Group Descriptive Analysis*

---

Group Classification: Neutral Resonance
$n = 141$
$\bar{x} = 4.1$
Median = 4.0
$VAR = 2.3$
$\sum x = 580$
$p < .001$

---

The international students participating in this study came from a diversity of religious backgrounds. The South Korean students come from a nation that is about evenly divided between Christian and Buddhist faiths. The Turkish students come from an Islamic nation, while the students from South American come from predominantly Catholic nations, and many European students come from largely protestant countries. Often the students express little knowledge about their own nation's religions, let alone about the religions of other lands. Many of the students said they are only nominal believers in their respective faiths, if at all. While there may be a curiosity about religions, the study participants expressed a sensitivity and

apprehension towards ignorant assessments and ridicule of others' religious beliefs. This was the case in the survey and oral response to the selection of images for the religion group, including clip titles of "Pope," "Rabbi," and "Priest and Nun" as described in Appendix C.

One student commented that it may be best to avoid religious themes and images, because "it is such a personal issue and people react to it differently. For some people their religion is top priority. They value it higher than their own life." Another student observed that older people in particular may be especially sensitive to portrayals of their faith, though "younger people may be more open." Most students expressed an oral agreement that it was best to avoid ridiculing or giving an impression of picking on someone else's faith.

### *Water*

The survey data in Table 5 demonstrate a neutral participant reaction to the collection of water group clips ( $\bar{x} = 4.4$ ), with a resonant agreement toward the neutrality ( $\text{VAR} = 1.8$ ). According to the data analysis algorithm, these results classify the water category as neutral resonance. Water subgroup clip descriptive data analyses are in Appendix D.

Table 5  
*Water Group Descriptive Analysis*

---

Group Classification: Neutral Resonance
$n = 165$
$\bar{x} = 4.4$
Median = 5.0
VAR = 1.8
$\sum x = 734$
$p < .001$

---

Water is another contextual category, in that is more specifically an image than a theme. Water as an image is a supporting character in the thematic presentation, so consequently the reactions to the water clips were complicated by overriding themes. For this category there were five clips within the category, to help further mitigate student reactions to various themes within the clips. The water group component clips as described in Appendix C included clip titles of “Water” (U.S.A.), “Swimming” (Thailand), “Seniors” (France), “Water Ballet” (France), and “Use Me Up” (U.S.A.). Students reacted positively to the water imagery, but may have been diverted by contextual factors within the category clips, for example, seniors swimming in a pool, or the classical music scoring an assortment of water images.

International students frequently respond to water images with an observably intent response to the screen as described in chapter 3, yet their response in this study was frequently modified or diminished according to the accompanying themes within the clips: “It was very peaceful and beautiful,” yet “I didn’t like the music or the old people”; or “I



like to go to the beaches at home,” yet “I don’t like people swimming in the water I’m going to drink.”

### Positively Resonant Themes and Images

The following group categories were identified as positively resonant, according to the analysis algorithm as defined above. The purpose of this study was to seek out these positively resonant themes and images, and quantify the magnitude of the response so the findings might be applied to the problem of instructors’ difficulty in achieving classroom cohesion between diverse nationalities and cultures. These group categories will be further considered in chapter 5, as they may be applied toward tactics for achieving positive resonance in international settings.

#### *Babies*

The survey data in Table 6 demonstrate a positive participant reaction to the collection of babies group clips ( $\bar{x} = 5.7$ ), with a resonant rating ( $VAR = 1.7$ ). This thematic group received the highest ranking with the strongest resonance of any category in the study. According to the data analysis algorithm, these results classify the babies category as positive resonance. Babies subgroup clip descriptive data analyses are in Appendix D.

Table 6  
*Babies Group Descriptive Analysis*

---

Group Classification: Positive Resonance  
 $n = 141$   
 $\bar{x} = 5.7$   
Median = 6.0  
VAR = 1.7  
 $\Sigma x = 808$   
 $p < .001$

---

One tense quarter in a global marketing course was impacted by ongoing classroom hostilities between Turkish and Brazilian students—instigated in part by the rivalries during a World Cup soccer competition, and further intensified by conflicts over the expressive sensuality of the Brazilians grating against the conservative Turks. The “Up & Go” clip was presented during a class session, showing a baby presumably standing for the first time to the triumphant strains of a classical tune. Two fathers in the class—one Turkish, one Brazilian—shared stories with one another about the first time their own babies stood up, and how much they missed them back at home. For a moment, the international rivalries diminished in a sharing of common ground.

The presented clips within the babies group included “Sign Baby” (U.S.A.), “Up & Go” (Sweden), and “Cry Baby” (France), as individually described in Appendix C. Both male and female students—especially the later—responded affectionately to the clips with babies: “It’s a baby!” and “Babies are so cute and innocent” were common types of comments. The affectionate response wasn’t unanimous, however. One male German

student said, “Most people think babies are so cute, but I just think about diapers. It doesn’t appeal to me at all.”

### *Animals*

The survey data in Table 7 demonstrate a positive participant reaction to the collection of animals group clips ( $\bar{x} = 5.7$ ), with a resonant rating (VAR = 2.0). According to the data analysis algorithm, these results classify the animals category as positive resonance. Animals subgroup clip descriptive data analyses are in Appendix D.

Table 7  
*Animals Group Descriptive Analysis*

---

Group Classification: Positive Resonance
$n = 141$
$\bar{x} = 5.7$
Median = 6.0
VAR = 2.0
$\sum x = 798$
$p < .001$

---

There is an advertising adage that the most successful commercials invoke the three *Bs* to attract consumer attention: Beasts, babies, and beauties. In relative magnitude, the presented clips in the animals group tied with the babies group in the survey’s highest scores, though slightly less in overall resonance. In the follow-up interviews as well as student response to other animal clips, dogs are viewed more favorably than cats or other animals such as cows, yet all the animal clips in this study (except for “Happy Cows”) ranked in the positive resonance range.

The clip “Sprinkler” was substituted for the clip “Happy Cows” in following survey sessions after some students expressed a problem with the overly sexist tone in the “Happy Cows” spot (when a bull said to a passing cow, “Hey baby, do you work out?”). Other than the language, both clips are both similar in the overall creative approach—talking cows and bulls in a field promoting the same product. The presented clips within the animals group included “Peanut Butter” (U.S.A.), “Confused Dog” (Singapore), “Happy Cows” (U.S.A.), and “Sprinkler” (U.S.A.), as individually described in Appendix C.

### *Relationships*

The survey data in Table 8 demonstrate a positive participant reaction to the collection of relationships group clips ( $\bar{x} = 5.3$ ), with a resonant rating (VAR = 2.1). According to the data analysis algorithm, these results classify the relationships category as positive resonance. Relationships subgroup clip descriptive data analyses are in Appendix D.

Table 8  
*Relationships Group Descriptive Analysis*

---

Group Classification: Positive Resonance
$n = 141$
$\bar{x} = 5.3$
Median = 6.0
VAR = 2.1
$\Sigma x = 754$
$p < .001$

---

As most of my international students are in their early to mid-20s and, with rare exception, unmarried, they are especially responsive to clips with a theme of relationships. Though the dynamics of a relationship may vary from culture to culture—in particular the respective roles and positions of the sexes—the students are especially attracted to clips that show a common tension between partners in a relationship, tensions of a type that go beyond cultural differences. For example, one student commented regarding a clip featuring a bickering husband and wife that “Everywhere people get married. It’s universal.”

The presented clips within the relationships group included “Marry Me?” (China), “Heads” (U.S.A.), “Moving Van” (U.S.A.), and “Snoring” (Mexico), as individually described in Appendix C. The clip “Heads” was substituted for the clip “Moving Van” in later survey sessions after some students expressed concern over the stereotypical portrayal of women as obsessively fixated on shoes: “It’s stupid to throw out stuff for the shoes. It’s insulting to the woman,” and it “made it look like the woman didn’t care about the man.”

### *Sports*

The presented clips within the sports group included “Anthem” (Poland), “Soccer” (U.S.A.), and “Football” (Netherlands), as further described in Appendix C. The survey data in Table 9 demonstrate a positive participant reaction to the collection of sports group clips ( $\bar{x} = 5.5$ ), with a resonant rating ( $VAR = 1.8$ ). According to the data analysis algorithm, these results classify the sports category as positive resonance. Sports subgroup clip descriptive data analyses are in Appendix D.

Table 9  
*Sports Group Descriptive Analysis*

---

Group Classification: Positive Resonance  
 $n = 141$   
 $\bar{x} = 5.5$   
Median = 6.0  
VAR = 1.8  
 $\Sigma x = 776$   
 $p < .001$

---

International students appear to be more engaged with sports than their American counterparts, especially with the game of soccer (or *football*, as they call it). International discussions of sports are frequently marked with rivalries between nations, yet there appears to be a transcultural commonality in their love of the game. The unifying theme of sports may be illustrated in the study's positively resonant "Anthem" clip ( $\bar{x} = 5.2$ ; VAR = 1.9):

Two raucous groups of opposing football (soccer) fans meet up at an alleyway intersection, and square off with one another in challenging stares. Suddenly a cell phone tone begins to play the Polish national anthem, and "in the spirit of the world cup" they soften and hug in the realization that a kindred commonality transcends rivalries. (Appendix C)

One young Brazilian woman participating in the study described her reaction to the theme of sports as a shared camaraderie between competitors: "It's just a game, unless we're playing Argentina. We have fights with them, but just them. (Usually) it's a good feeling between the people when we're playing."

### *Self Image*

The survey data in Table 10 demonstrate a positive participant reaction to the collection of self image group clips ( $\bar{x} = 5.0$ ), with a resonant rating (VAR = 2.4).

According to the data analysis algorithm, these results classify the self image category as positive resonance. Self image subgroup clip descriptive data analyses are in Appendix D.

Table 10  
*Self Image Group Descriptive Analysis*

---

Group Classification: Positive Resonance
$n = 188$
$\bar{x} = 5.0$
Median = 5.0
VAR = 2.4
$\Sigma x = 945$
$p < .001$

---

This grouping is a reference to how we see other people, rather than how we see our own selves. While we all may have a self image, we might also appreciate that others have their own self image, and even though we may not understand or relate to that image, we may have a transcultural interest in the self image of others. This concept is reflected in student interest in other students' national anthems and flags as the symbols of their national identity, a popular component in some of my classes.

The presented clips within the self image group included "Popping" (U.S.A.), "Odyssey" (U.K.), and "Internet" (International), as individually described in Appendix C. These clips featured themes and images particular to certain cultures and cultural

subgroups such as American or British youth cultures, or composites of multiple cultures such as the “Internet” clip. For example, the clip “Odyssey” is set to a musical background:

A young man in a bleak and sparse apartment house opens a room door and begins running strongly and free, bursting through interior building walls. About midway through the run, a young woman joins in, also breaking through a series of walls. They pause a moment, exchange glances, then continue on with their run, through the last wall of the building, up a towering tree, then leaping free into open air. (Appendix C)

The follow-up interviews included participant comments on this theme such as “It’s nice to see lots of different kinds of people”; “I like ads that show the masses”; and “Different cultures, different customs are interesting to me.” One South Korean participant, however, commented after a session that some people may find the flags and national anthems of their historic enemies’ offensive, and some students expressed bewilderment over cultural contexts perhaps antithetical to their own.

### *Life Cycles*

The survey data in Table 11 demonstrate a positive participant reaction to the collection of life cycles group clips ( $\bar{x} = 5.1$ ), with a resonant rating ( $VAR = 2.3$ ).

According to the data analysis algorithm, these results classify the life cycles category as positive resonance. Life cycles subgroup clip analyses are in Appendix D.



Table 11  
*Life Cycles Group Descriptive Analysis*

---

Group Classification: Positive Resonance  
 $n = 141$   
 $\bar{x} = 5.1$   
Median = 5.0  
VAR = 2.3  
 $\Sigma x = 723$   
 $p < .001$

---

Regardless of our diverse national systems and cultures, one fundamental trait all peoples have in common is that they are born, they live, and they die. The presented clips within the life cycles group included “Old Man” (Thailand), “Elevator Fantasy” (U.S.A.), and “Champagne” (U.K.), as described in Appendix C.

Participant comments on clips within this thematic group included “Birth and death—everybody has the same physical process,” and “My career, my life, babies—I think a lot about those things.” One of the starkest presentations of the birth-life-death cycle theme was in the clip “Champagne”:

A woman in a hospital delivery room, in a final push, expels her newborn through the hospital window with such force that it arcs across the sky, aging in extended flight as it goes, shooting through boyhood, puberty, manhood, into decaying old age as he finally lands with a crash into a gravesite. The marketing message from an electronic game company: “Life is short—play more.” (Appendix D)

### Summary

The study employed a methodology and analysis algorithm as described in chapter 3 and further detailed in this chapter. The participant reactions to various images and themes were assessed according to the magnitude of their response, as well as the level of resonance or dissonance to thematic groupings. The findings in this study indicated that certain themes and images may evoke a positive transcultural resonance in an international classroom. Themes and images which evoked a negative dissonance or a neutral reaction were considered as well, since international instructors may need to consider those in course design. Those themes and images include religion, sex, humor, and nationalism. The themes and images which evoke a positive resonance identified in this study include babies, animals, relationships, sports, self image, and life cycles. Individual subgroup clip analyses are in Appendix D. An overall summary of the group comparisons are in Appendix E. How those themes and images might be applied in an exemplified international setting will be further considered in chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND APPLICATIONS

### Introduction

The problem this study addressed is that teachers in international courses are frequently unable to accommodate the clash of cultural variations among a growing diversity of international students (e.g., Adam, 2003; Pinheiro, 2001). This study sought to identify transcultural themes and images that might enhance the educational experience of instructors and international students, as each of them interacts with other nationalities in the classroom. A secondary question that follows the research is how might these culturally transcendent themes and images be applied to course design, applicable in traditional and online international settings?

The findings in chapter 4 indicate that certain themes and images may indeed evoke a positive transcultural resonance in an international classroom. These identified themes and images included babies, animals, relationships, sports, self image, and life cycles. The findings also indicate other themes and images may evoke a negative dissonance or a neutral reaction, including religion, sex, humor, and nationalism. While images of water may pose an effective appeal for international students, the confounding themes employing the water imagery may have lowered the level of students ranking their response to clips in the water grouping. This chapter further considers the implications of those findings, including how the findings might be perilously misapplied; and also considers how the transculturally resonant themes and images might be applied to the design of an international course in global economics.

## Discussion of Results

This study benefited from a fortunate conjunction of circumstances, including a diverse group of international participants over an extended period comfortable enough in a cross-cultural setting to express assorted and even adversarial viewpoints; repetitious and consistent exposure to numerous images and themes; and an attentive researcher/observer who might make some theoretical assumptions over successive groups of international participants. Given this efficacious set of conditions, the current study was able to fill some voids in existing literature.

Freire's (1993) related research with the Brazilian underclass had an aim similar to the current study: speak to the students using themes, images, symbols, and words that resonate. Although Freire provided insights into one the most important criteria undertaken in the current study—a consistency in the presentation of resonant themes and images—his research falls short in two of the other key criteria addressed in this study of transcultural applicability: multinational diversity in the sample, and a global focus of the researcher, as Freire limited his study and application to a single nationality.

Hofstede (1984) surveyed employees of a single company in 66 countries, however the aim of that study was to discover cultural variation between homogenous groups, rather than find transcultural similarities between diverse groups—the opposite aim of the current study. Other researchers (e.g., Adler, 2001; Calloway-Thomas, Cooper, & Blake, 1999) have found that students of international relations may also have a problem separating their own belief system when interacting with people from entirely different foundations. This current study has provided additional insights into what specific themes may be reflected in those contrary belief systems, particularly in the

neutral, negative, or dissonant reactions to themes of religions, nationalism, sex, and what different cultures may or may not find humorous. Related literature may be useful in further defining the differences between cultures (e.g., Ackoff, 1999; Hall, 1989), or in bridging differences within a single culture (e.g., Macia, 1999), yet this current study addressed the issue of transcending those cultural differences and finding commonalities among multiple nationalities in a single classroom setting.

There were no surprises in the findings regarding what themes and images might create a neutral, negative, or dissonant reaction among international students, including the reactions to video clips with humor, sex, religion, and nationalism as central themes. These themes have long been anecdotal as taboo topics leading toward discord at dinner parties, and findings in this study indicate significant cultural variations in participant response as well, especially in thematic areas of nationalism (VAR = 3.3) and humor (VAR = 3.3).

The more positively resonant themes and images of babies, animals, relationships, sports, self image, and life cycles were marked by higher scores and lower variation in resonance, likely due to a greater universality of common attitudes toward those categories. There was a particularly strong and resonant reaction to the video clips with the relatively straightforward themes and images of babies ( $\bar{x} = 5.7$ ; VAR = 1.7), animals ( $\bar{x} = 5.7$ ; VAR = 2.0), and sports ( $\bar{x} = 5.5$ ; VAR = 1.8). Among the most common of all human experiences—the birth and raising of babies—clips with this theme scored the highest with the greatest resonance of all the categories in the study.

Other themes—though scoring a positive resonance according to the classification formulae—may have been diminished in participant reaction due to their more complex

shadings and subthemes, as well as greater cultural differences in their interpretation. For example, the participants were responsive to clips with a theme of relationships ( $\bar{x} = 5.3$ ;  $\text{VAR} = 2.1$ ), though with lower overall scores and less resonance than the categories of babies, animals, and sports. This may be due to the different dynamics of relationships that might vary from culture to culture, in particular the respective roles and positions of the sexes, which may have complicated their reactions to the relationship category clips. The greater complexity of certain themes may have been evidenced as well in the participant reaction to the life cycles group of clips, though scored as positively resonant ( $\bar{x} = 5.1$ ;  $\text{VAR} = 2.3$ ), still ranked relatively weak in the data compared to other positively resonant themes. The life cycle theme typically evoked strong student interest and commentary, though may have scored lower because some students might have had a problem following the necessarily complicated nature of the life cycle clips. One student comment she enjoyed a life cycle themed clip more on the second viewing, once she was able to follow the complicated story better.

The same phenomena may be applied to the self-image theme as well, which also scored in the positively resonant range ( $\bar{x} = 5.0$ ;  $\text{VAR} = 2.4$ ). As the meaning or context or a more complicated theme is drawn out in classroom discussions or a repeated viewing of a clip, the students may react more strongly than in a first impression where they might not gather the full meaning or impact of the imagery and theme. However at other times, the participants expressed a diminished interest in a clip as it became boring on a second viewing.

As considered in chapter 4, the grouping of water clips was a contextual category, in that water is more specifically an image than a theme. Water as an image is a

supporting character in the thematic presentation, so consequently the reactions to the water clips were complicated by contextual themes. Students reacted positively to the water imagery, but may have been diverted by confounding factors within the video clips, for example, seniors swimming in a pool, or the classical music scoring an assortment of water images.

### Implications of the Study

The transcultural themes and images identified in this study might be applied to diverse international groups, whether in business meetings, organizational gatherings, diplomatic summits, educational seminars, and so on. These transcultural tools may be deployed by speakers, in setting décor and design, multimedia presentations, and such that may incorporate transcultural themes and images to create a greater sense of mutuality and common ground. Such an ability to find common terms and reference points, even in an attenuate form, is a “valuable asset in an increasingly global world. Corporate, nonprofit, and governmental leaders increasingly have no choice but to engage in multinational cooperative endeavors” (Keohane, 2001, p. 187).

### *Potential Misapplications*

Before further considering how the results of this study might be applied in appropriate circumstances and methods, it may be prudent to consider how the findings might be misapplied, either through unintentional malfunction or nefarious design. The successful application of transcultural methods may well be derailed by a perilous misapplication of motives and intent. These perils include a dismissive regard for cultural diversity; a homogenization of the educational process; a pedagogical advantage to cultural

imperialists; ever greater schisms between developing and developed nations; destabilizing threats to existing systems; as well as personal threats to successful proponents of education reform; as considered below.

Conscientious educators should be clear on intentions toward achieving a transcultural environment, as opposed to imposing a particular worldview on international classmates. Freire (1993) warned against a form of cultural invasion, where misguided educators may “penetrate the cultural context of another group, in disrespect of the latter’s potentialities; they impose their own view of the world upon those they invade and inhibit the creativity of the invaded by curbing their expression” (p. 152). Established institutions offering education to other nations may frequently be insensitive to the characteristics of a local culture and the students’ particular needs (Newman, Couturier, & Scurry, 2004). A primary use of English as the language of international instruction raises further questions “about cultural imperialism and homogenization. Developing countries would surely be ill-served if universities from the outside replaced local universities rather than supplemented them” (p. 28).

A dominant cultural penetration may be inadvertent or an intentional imposition of particular political or economic agendas through propaganda empowered by transcultural tactics. To protect against the imposition of alien agendas, numerous countries have closed themselves from the influences of outside perspectives. According to the human rights organization Freedom House, at least 20 countries—such as Myanmar, Cuba, North Korea, and China—have restricted their citizens’ access to alien influences, particularly through the Internet. Foreign educational efforts—whether online or onground—may be especially suspect. Education in particular has been jealously



guarded in many nations and is carefully protected as a matter of nationalism and a solidifier of cultural differences (Irvine, 2003). Educators should be heedful in using transcultural learning methods to advance an instructor's own particular political or social agenda, not only for the ethical issues that may be raised, but for the damage it may do to the tenuous participation of nations already wary of outside motives.

Providing culturally isolated peoples access to a global collective of cultures is not necessarily a clear-cut end in itself, as witnessed by some of the pitfalls found when introducing connective technology to village life. Cotopoxi men remote in Ecuador used their aid-provided computer equipment to access online pornography rather than crop information, much to the dismay of Cotopoxi women. And when impoverished women of the Wapishana and Macushi tribes in Guyana began making “big” money by marketing their hand-woven hammocks over the Web, the threatened male hierarchy drove them from their homes (Romero, 2000).

Some educators who effectively employ teaching tools such as transcultural learning may find themselves victims of their own results. Brazilian educator Paulo Freire proved especially successful in adapting teaching method and molding it into themes and images that resonated with his target students—the impoverished and illiterate workers of Brazil's villages and cities. In fact, so successful were Freire's techniques, that within just 45 days, 300 workers in the city of Angicos had learned to read and write (Elias & Merriam, 1995, p. 146). Confronted by opposition in Brazilian conservative circles, Freire was accused of “using his literacy method to spread subversive and revolutionary ideas,” ultimately landing Freire in jail along with other leftist leaders following a military coup (p. 146).

*Educational Applications*

Global postsecondary education enrollments increased from 6.5 million in 1950 to 88.2 million in 1997, and are forecasted to reach 160 million by 2025 (Irvine, 2003). However, this demand for global higher education comes at a time when teachers skilled with global cultural competence are so few (ACE, 2002). In that vein, the study findings are considered below in how they might apply to the design of a transculturally effective international course in global economics.

The question now addressed is how might the themes and images considered in this study be best applied toward an improved positive resonance across cultural diversities in international classrooms? The following sections consider possible applications of the positively resonant themes and images that may better empower international educators, to help improve common ground and positive interactions among students of diverse nationalities and cultures.

These applications could apply in the face-to-face classroom experience, or in the increasingly rich online environment uniting students around the world in a common virtual classroom. As considered in chapter 2, with the rapid hardware and software breakthroughs, newer information technology may soon provide human interaction in a high-definition and three-dimensional telepresence, allowing for distance education comparable to a face-to-face experience (Duderstadt, 2000). Already the current experience with the asynchronous distance learning process can be just as effective as the classroom experience in terms of learning and costs, and in some technical ways may already be superior to regular courses (Bok, 2003).

Given the increasing numbers of international students within traditional and customized programs as institutions seek to expand their enrollments beyond national borders, curricula and pedagogies may need to be adapted to accommodate a wider array of cultural and linguistic differences (OECD, 2003). By applying the resonant themes and images identified in the study, international students might benefit in a number of ways, including an increased comfort level in a strange environment. An international environment that provides a familiar ambience through transcultural themes and images may not only reduce the pangs of isolation, but might also help improve bonding between students as they are able to better relate to each other through common ground on an individual basis, and as they also enhance their integration within the entire class by finding common group reference points (Taylor, Marienau, & Fiddler, 2000).

Furthermore, students may find an expanded content relevancy through a transcultural context for the course materials. As considered in chapter 2, such an application of resonant themes and images may serve to better engage students' attention in the learning process, as evidenced by the impressive learning results achieved by illiterate Brazilian farmers through Freire's (1993) use of contextually resonant graphics.

### Classroom Examples

How might the findings of transculturally positive resonant themes and images be applied to an undergraduate level course—in this exemplified case, a course in global economics—serving a classroom populated by international students? That

question may be considered by demonstrating possible applications of themes and images as they might be employed to illustrate key economic concepts within classroom lectures and discussions, engaging multimedia tools such as offered through PowerPoint presentations.

Wilson (2001) observed there is simply not enough time in the highly diverse classroom “to bring forward examples that appeal to everyone’s interest and draw on everyone’s experiences” (p. 206). This limitation may be mitigated through the use of a technology-enhanced environment, offering interactive resources online, as well as multimedia presentations within the classroom, allowing for better incorporation of transculturally resonant themes and images. Meyer (2002) found that meaningful learning can be assisted through the use of images when students find a cognitive engagement through a combination of *verbal* and *pictorial* processes. Verbal modes of instruction include words spoken through lecture and discussion, while pictorial modes employ the use of “static graphics (such as photographs, illustrations, figures, and charts) and dynamic graphics (such as animation and video),” (pp. 61-62).

Some media formats for the projection of themes and images may prove more effective than others. Among the flaws in solely relying on still photographs to convey cross-cultural thematic experiences is that people insulated from the global economy may be unused to photographs, while others may give a different meaning to the pictures according to their biographies (Loizos, 2002, p. 96). However, this shortcoming may be mitigated in the classroom by also employing richer video presentations (p. 103).

The transcultural themes and images presented within the international classroom through lecture, discussion, readings, and rich media might help enhance classroom resonance, and develop a learning context for international students—a contextual relevance they may share with other nationalities. To provide a learning context, Klapan (2001) observed that the educational needs and abilities of all adults may be regarded as both human and societal, with effective instructors motivating and encouraging individual development in accordance with the greater social and even global needs. The presentation of themes and images within the learning examples described below might serve to evoke the resonance of commonly shared reactions, as well as place the themes and images within greater social and human contexts.

The following examples consider possible methods to promote learning in an international classroom, and the means to apply the transculturally resonant themes and images identified in this study as supported through multimedia presentations. The thematic groupings of the considered examples include positively resonant themes of babies, animals, relationships, sports, self image, and life cycles. Water, while difficult to specify as an isolated theme or image, nonetheless appears to have common appeal among the international students. Though not further considered in the examples below, water may yet serve as a transcultural tool among international students within a greater context of possible group interactions involving water-related activities such as get-acquainted excursions with a boat trip or a picnic on the shore.

## *Babies*

Components of a course in global economics might address the social and economic costs of war, slave labor, trafficking in women and children, and so on. The International Labor Organization (1997) reports that 250 million children around the world who should be in school are at work instead, many in conditions of slavery in mines, factories, and plantations. As demonstrated in Figure 1, issues regarding human rights and social justice may make a deeper and more resonant impression on the students if presented within the context of the impact on babies and young children, as in the illustrated case of the affects of warfare on children in Palestine and Iraq. Another application of this theme may be to consider the health services provided by nations in terms of infant mortality rates. Yet another economic concept may be illustrated through this applied theme: studies have found that the level of child spankings correlates to income levels, as higher income parents may be better placed to inflict financial rather than physical punishments.




*Figure 1.* Young children depicting social and economic costs of war.

*Animals*

Students are frequently reluctant participants in a course on economics. The economic concepts may be bewilderingly theoretical and difficult to apply to familiar circumstances. The explanation and comparison of economic systems such as capitalism, socialism, and communism may be assisted by employing the transculturally resonant application of animals, such as the family cow in the often-quoted cow's guide to economic systems (Figure 2). The economic dynamics of technological development might also be affectively illustrated with the resonant assistance of cows: Prior to refrigeration, the only way to keep milk fresh at home was inside the cow. This meant twice daily milking (early morning and late afternoon). This in turn impacted the daily social and economic life cycle of the family. Once we had refrigeration, we could just go out and buy a half gallon of milk from ever-larger dairy farms, where each cow in the herd represented one family that no longer had to have a cow, freeing up human and natural resources for other avenues of personal and societal development.

### Cows' Guide to Economic Systems

- SOCIALISM - you have two cows. The government takes them and puts them in a barn with everyone else's cows. The government gives you as much milk as you need.
- COMMUNISM - you have two cows. Your neighbors help you take care of them. You all share the milk.
- CAPITALISM – you have two cows. You sell one and buy a bull.



*Figure 2.* Cows help to demonstrate economic systems.

## Relationships

The economic cycle might be considered through a relationship perspective on analysis of the cyclically graphic *sigmoid curve*. It illustrates the story of economic cycles or a corporation's rise and fall. It may even chart the course of love and relationships. Relationships may start slowly, experimentally, and clumsily; reach romantic peaks, and then—without proper care and attention—the relationship cycle may terminally wane. Furthermore, employing the relationship theme to help demonstrate John Nash's theory of equilibrium, international students may benefit by a video clip from the popular movie *A Beautiful Mind* (Figure 3) calling into question a fundamental principle of Adam Smith that the driver of individual self-interest serves the common good. The clip portrays young men in a bar competing for the attentions of a young beautiful woman, ultimately tripping over each other as well as alienating the other young women in the room. The clip illustrates a proposed mixed of strategies, where the best interests of the individual are served when also considering the good of the group.



Figure 3. Film clip demonstrates John Nash's theory of equilibrium.



## Sports

As illustrated in the study's "Anthem" clip (Appendix D), the theme of sports may evoke a spirit of camaraderie in the classroom—a common bond even in the competitive atmosphere of sports. The principle of mixed cooperative and competitive economic drivers may be resonantly demonstrated through example of the Daytona 500 (Figure 4), where a racecar driver must attract a *drafting* partner in ever-shifting patterns of cooperation and competition among rivals. The resonant sports theme may also help illustrate the economic principle of *Ricardo's law of comparative advantage*. The principle is based on Adam Smith's concept of specialization of labor, such as may be found in the various specialized positions on teams in baseball, basketball, football, soccer, and so on. Ricardo observed that a socioeconomic system will benefit if all members do what they do best, and society will sacrifice less to the opportunity costs of people doing what they do not do as well.

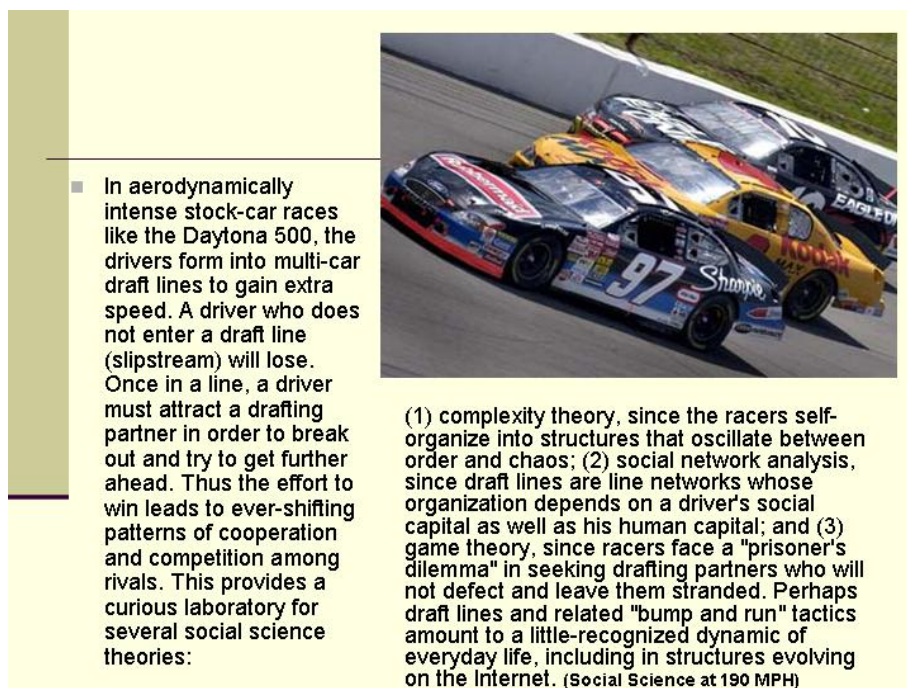


Figure 4. Daytona 500 demonstrates complexity theory and social networking.

## *Self Image*

This study indicated a transcultural interest in the lifestyles and ways of other nations and cultures, and cultural subgroups as well. This resonant theme may be effectively employed as the global economics course considers related issues of business ethics, various perspectives on wealth and value, as well as differing takes on the context of human socioeconomic interaction. This might be illustrated by considering the Masai concept of value and beauty in others (Figure 5); an inspiring perspective from one of the world's poorest peoples, yet with a rich philosophy of life. My international students have responded well to presentations on the self-image of other nations, in particular a presentation on flags and patriotic anthems as the national symbols of different lands. Another seemingly well received presentation has considered college students' cultural view on the concept of *freedom*, as surveyed among college students in a diverse selection of nations.

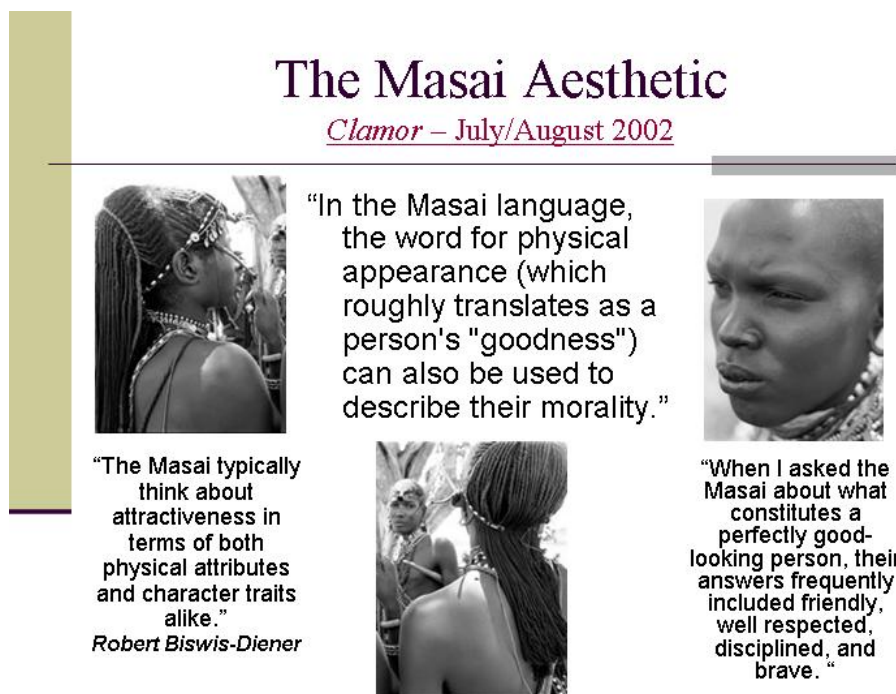


Figure 5. Masai perspective on beauty.

### *Life cycles*

Both face-to-face and online classroom discussions may be useful to address greater economic and social issues impacting the students' daily life. Discussion topics such as unemployment, military spending, education funding, health care support, family planning, and so on may be better facilitated by employing transculturally resonant life cycle themes, and how those topics impact the daily and lifelong course of the students' lives. One student participating in the study observed, "My career, my life, babies—I think a lot about those things." As illustrated in Figure 6, these discussions might be facilitated with topical and thematic discussion questions. These topics may be made more relevant by citing developments and data during class sessions that project social and economic trends over the next 20 or so years, which are some of the most important years in the students' professional and personal growth.

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**Unemployment rate:** Is it high or low in your country? Does the government provide unemployment insurance? What does someone in your country do when they lose a job?

**Military:** Is service mandatory in your country? Do they offer benefits and incentives for service? Is military spending a big part of your economy?

**Education:** Who pays the largest part for education in your country, private or public funds? Who should pay? Is there financial aid? How important is education to economic development?

**Health care:** How much does a visit to the doctor cost? A stay in the hospital? Who pays: private or government funds? Who should pay? Do you have private insurance companies? Is health care regulated? Should it be?

**Family planning:** What is happening with the birth rate in your country? Are people getting married later? Do you think the current state of the economy in your country is helping or hurting families? How? Has this impacted your own plans for marriage and a family?

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*Figure 6.* Sample life cycle topics in classroom discussions.

### Suggestions for Further Study

The possibilities of transcultural learning may be further realized by additional research into assessing the effectiveness of applied resonant themes and images in the classroom, including measures of any increased levels of student engagement, interaction, and satisfaction in courses where transcultural themes have been applied. Further beneficial research may also be conducted into additional themes and images that might be transculturally resonant. This research might be conducted by applying similar methods as employed in this study to a broader range of international courses in the humanities such as literature, music, art, history, sociology, religions, and so on. Supplementary studies may find other and even better educational contexts, forms of media, and pedagogical methods for incorporating transcultural themes and images into the international classroom. It may be that longer portrayal of transcultural themes and images may prove more or less effective in evoking resonance, than the short commercial clips employed in this current study.

Perhaps transculturally resonant learning might best be achieved through field trips, interpersonal exchanges, and informal rather than formal instructional settings—for example, student-led discussion groups rather than instructor lectures. The efficacy of transcultural techniques may also be further assessed through applied situations and assignments, such as interactive discussion questions where students are given a range of topics to pick from and reply to, so researchers might seek which potentially transcultural themes may be particularly appealing and stimulate higher levels of discussion compared to less resonant themes.

### Social Change Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify tools that may better empower international educators through the application of resonant themes and images in the classroom, to help improve common ground and positive interactions among students of diverse nationalities and cultures. Practical experience may demonstrate that many administrators in higher education are less concerned with addressing issues of social change that may be offered by transcultural methods, but are rather more concerned with mundane issues of enrollment numbers and student retention. A transcultural approach to international education may help address those concerns, as well as issues of greater social significance. As institutions improve the learning experience for international students, they may enhance their competitiveness in the global education marketplace (ACE, 2002). This is particularly true of American colleges and universities, which “cannot claim to have the best system of higher education in the world unless graduates can free themselves of ethnocentrism bred of ignorance and can navigate the difficult terrain of cultural complexity” (Engberg & Green, 2002, p. 7), such as may be assisted through the application of transcultural tools.

Beyond the academic and programmatic benefits that might be gained from enhanced transcultural learning, strained global relations call for more effective communications within other international settings as well. Many international students studying in the United States come from rather privileged backgrounds, and may eventually assume top leadership positions in their home countries. The international students participating in effectively designed transcultural learning

programs may ultimately contribute improved cross-cultural leadership toward a less conflicted world.

The world is divided by as many as 6,000 different languages, with a small number of languages such as Arabic, Bengali, English, French, Hindi, Malay, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish serving to bridge our linguistic gulfs (Tucker, 1999). Likewise, transcultural themes may help to bridge our vast cultural differences. As expanded global technologies and interactions continue to play an ever increasing role in offering educational opportunities across cultural divides, a transcultural context of shared humanity may provide us with an educational foundation that retains the human dimensions necessary for effectively raising and educating young generations (Serdyukov, 2001).

Perhaps among the most valuable aspects of the potential in globally adaptive international higher education are the benefits to be gained in learning about world problems that transcend national boundaries, as students from differing nations and cultures better share their experiences and perspectives with one another. By such enhanced understanding, humanity may best discover solutions that tap the interconnectedness of global systems—be they cultural, ecological, economic, political, or technological (Tye, 2003). Ironically, it is through the effort to find transcultural common ground that we may connect and come to better appreciate our many varieties.

### Summary

The effective use of transcultural themes and images may help promote positive resonance in international settings, such as found in the classrooms of a globalizing higher education. It might also pose peril as the tactics may be used for propaganda rather than educational ends. Findings of transculturally resonant themes and images may be applied to international classroom pedagogy through such means as multimedia presentations including transcultural images and themes in classroom lectures and discussions. In the sample of a global economics course, concepts of relationships might be used to demonstrate economic theory; sports analogies may be used to illustrate systems theory; animal metaphors and similes may be used to illustrate economic principles; life cycle topics may be used to engage students in classroom discussions; babies and young persons may be used to contextualize social and economic conditions; and so on. Additional study could be useful in measuring the classroom learning results of applied transculturalism, as well as seeking out additional transculturally resonant themes and images and methods for their application. Social good may be realized as diverse nationalities are better empowered to share differing perspectives and understanding in international settings.

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## Appendix A: Measurement Instrument

Please rate your opinion of the video clips as presented on a scale ranging from 'strongly dislike' through 'strongly like.' Please also provide the demographic information to the questions below. As detailed in your consent form, all responses are confidential.

**Nationality:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Age:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Length of time in the United States:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Clip 1: "Fish Love"

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

### Clip 2: "Up & Go"

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

### Clip 3: "Heads"

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

### Clip 4: "Headache"

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

### Clip 5: "The Haka"

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

### Clip 6: "Elevator Fantasy"

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

### Clip 7: "Pope"

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

### Clip 8: "The Internet"

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

### Clip 9: "Confused Dog"

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 10: “American”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 11: “Quick Soup”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 12: “Swimming”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

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**Clip 13: “Sign Baby”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 14: “Whassup”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 15: “Seniors”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

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**Clip 16: “Marry Me?”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 17: “Football”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 18: “Odyssey”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

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**Clip 19: “Peanut Butter”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 20: “Love Kiss”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 21: “Priest & Nun”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 22: “Anthem”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 23: “Sprinkler”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 24: “The Rant”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

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**Clip 25: “Popping”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 26: “Snoring”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 27: “Rabbi”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

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**Clip 28: “Old Man”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 29: “Champagne”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 30: “Proof”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

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**Clip 31: “Water”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 32: “Soccer”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_

**Clip 33: “Cry Baby”**

Strongly Dislike\_\_\_\_ Moderately Dislike\_\_\_\_ Slightly Dislike\_\_\_\_ No Opinion\_\_\_\_ Slightly Like\_\_\_\_ Moderately Like\_\_\_\_ Strongly Like\_\_\_\_



## Appendix B: Student Consent Form

**Steven R. Van Hook**  
**PhD in Education Program, Walden University**

### **Informed Consent for Research Involving Human Subjects**

You are being invited to participate in a research study. This form is designed to provide you with information about this study. The Investigator (Steven R. Van Hook) will describe this study to you and answer any of your questions.

This research study is attempting to measure your reaction to various themes and images presented in brief video clips. The study will include a simple survey form, and may also involve tape recordings of classroom discussions and questions, and excerpts from work you may complete in the class. All information gathered is confidential and anonymous. Your participation is limited to this quarter, and your participation HAS NO EFFECT on your grade for the course. If you decline to complete the survey document, your grade will not be affected.

Results of this research may be included in a pilot study and a doctoral dissertation, and may be presented at scholarly meetings and in articles for publication. No participant's identity will be revealed in any written materials or presentations.

If you give your consent to have your responses included in the research study, please print your name then sign on the signature line, including today's date.

Thank you.

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I agree to allow my survey responses, comments and material from work I submit for this course to be used for academic purposes by the investigator, including (but not limited to) preparation of a pilot study and dissertation, and such forums as presentation at conferences and publication in scholarly journals. I understand that my anonymity will be safeguarded in the process.

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C: Subject Group Descriptions

Each subject group heading of clips is comprised of three sub-group clips categorized according to the overall group theme. Following are detail of the subject groups in alphabetical order of Animals, Babies, Humor, Life Cycle, Nationalism, Relationships, Religion, Self Image, Sex, Sports, and Water, including summary descriptions of the group component clips.

### *Animals Group Summaries*

Clip Name: Peanut Butter

Country: U.S.A.

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: A young boy is sitting on a front porch eating peanut butter from a spoon and sipping milk through a curly straw, while a large dog hopefully watches. The boy extends the spoon to the dog who gratefully takes a bite, then begins to repeatedly lick its tongue to work the peanut butter off the roof of its mouth. The marketing message is sometimes milk comes in handy.

Clip Name: Confused Dog

Country: Singapore

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: A dog happily runs home after a day of play, entering through a swinging doggie door, to be confused by the living room which has been freshly and attractively refurnished. The dog runs outside, checks the number by the door, and returns inside in continued confusion.

Clip Name: Happy Cows

Country: U.S.A.

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: Two bulls with computer-generated mouth movements are grazing in bountiful and sun-drenched fields, commenting in English how nice the California life is, when an attractive cow saunters by. They bulls make some stereotypical male comments, such as “whoa—do you work out?” and other banter. The marketing message is great cheese comes from happy cows, and happy cows live in California.

Clip Name: Sprinkler

Country: U.S.A.

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: Another in the series of “happy California cows,” a playfully voiced cow comments “it’s time for a spritz,” as a sprinkler begins to spray the lush pasture land and showers her wet. A romantic love song “lady” begins to play, and two nearby bulls make appreciative sounds and comments.

### *Babies Group Summaries*

Clip Name: Sign Baby

Country: U.S.A.

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: A baby is swinging in a mechanical swing, laughing on the upswing and beginning to cry on the downswing. After several repetitions of this, the perspective turns to show that as the swing goes high, the baby is able to see McDonald's golden arches through a window, which on the downswing the baby is not able to see. A similar spot has run in other countries, replacing the American baby with a regional nationality.

Clip Name: Up & Go

Country: Sweden

Running Time: 45 seconds

Description: A diapered baby is comfortably seated on a living room rug, as dramatic strains of Strauss' *Thus Spake Zarathustra* begin to play. As the music continues, the baby turns to crawl, and then, with a breakthrough effort as sunlight beams through picture windows, stands for the (apparently) first time, with a marketing message that it is time for a new style of diaper.

Clip Name: Cry Baby

Country: France

Running Time: 40 seconds

Description: A baby is crying fitfully on a public bus loaded with other passengers. A man offers to take the baby from the distraught mother, and begins to perform a tune-up, so the baby now cries in a well-running pitch, rather in than burps and squawks. The man exits the bus with a satisfied smile, as the slogan proclaims the mechanic's work is never done.

### *Humor Group Summaries*

Clip Name: Fish Love

Country: Singapore

Running Time: 35 seconds

Description: The scene is an apartment with a young man sitting on a couch, while a young woman prepares to leave for the day. There is a large fish in an aquarium. When the young woman leaves, the young man takes the fish and dances with it, romances it on the couch, shares a milkshake with it. When the young woman suddenly returns, the man takes a cleaning spray to remove the apartment of fish smells, so the woman would not know what had been happening.

Clip Name: Whassup

Country: U.S.A.

Running Time: 60 seconds

Description: A dog exits a rural house during an evening party, runs to a vacant field, and is transported aboard a spaceship on a light beam. The ship flies home through space, and at a gathering of aliens, the dog removes its costume to reveal an alien inside, who had been spying on earth. An official at the gathering asks the spy what it learned, and after a pause, the alien says in an exaggerated street voice, “Whassup?” The other aliens begin to mimic the word, which is heard by an earthbound military listener, who declares, “We are not alone.” The spot ends with a logo for a beer brand.

Clip Name: Love Kiss

Country: Russia

Running Time: 20 seconds

Description: The song *Love me Tender* plays in the background while various Russian leaders (e.g., Brezhnev, Khrushchev, and other prominent dignitaries) exchange formal kisses taken from news clips, on the mouth as is common in Russian culture. After a dozen seconds of this, the tagline comes on for a breath mint, which is the “secret of the long kiss.”

Clip Name: The Haka

Country: Belgium

Running Time: 45 seconds

Description: Two opposing football (soccer) teams face each other on a field. The New Zealand team performs a Maori battle chant, challenging the Scottish players. After the Maori chant is done, the Scots stand for a moment, then lift up their kilts toward the New Zealanders in a show of nationalism, promoting a brand of Scotch Whiskey.

Clip Name: Proof

Country: U.K.

Running Time: 95 seconds

Description: An attractive woman saunters on to a stage, and says she is about to demonstrate how the lingerie she is wearing is the world’s most erotic. As proof, she hops on and rides a mechanical bull, undulating in sensual and provocative motions. A matronly woman watches the display. Afterwards, the women invite the men in the audience to stand; suggesting the men—too embarrassed to stand—are proof of the lingerie’s effect.

### *Life Cycle Group Summaries*

Clip Name: Old Man

Country: Thailand

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: A younger man sits in a sparse yet warm apartment reading a newspaper when the light burns out. A close-up shows his youngish face as he replaces the light bulb then returns to his seat and newspaper. Moments later, the bulb burns out once more. As the light returns after he again replaces it, the close-up shows the same man though considerably aged by decades, thanks to a long-lasting light bulb.

Clip Name: Elevator Fantasy

Country: U.S.A.

Running Time: 60 seconds

Description: A young man and woman get on an elevator, both in attractive blue jeans, exchanging sideways glances as they check each other out. Suddenly their eyes lock and they slip into a fantasy vision of running through a field hand-in-hand to romantic music, then to a chapel where they are getting married, then on to a honeymoon suite, and finally to a hospital delivery room, where the vision ends in a shriek of sweaty panic as they resume their elevator ride. The two hastily leave the elevator, heading in opposite directions.

Clip Name: Champagne

Country: U.K.

Running Time: 50 seconds

Description: This commercial was pulled from the air by the BBC after a number of viewers complained over its intensely graphic nature. A woman in a hospital delivery room, in a final push, expels her newborn through the hospital window with such force that it arcs across the sky, aging in extended flight as it goes, shooting through boyhood, puberty, manhood, into decaying old age as he finally lands with a crash into a gravesite. The marketing message from an electronic game company: "Life is short—play more."

### *Nationalism Group Summaries*

Clip Name: American

Country: U.S.A.

Running Time: 60 seconds

Description: A wide assortment of Americans representing various races and demographics repeat over and over in brief individual segments the words, "I am an American." The spot was produced following the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center, to bolster American unity and pride.

Clip Name: The Haka

Country: Belgium

Running Time: 45 seconds

Description: Two opposing football (soccer) teams face each other on a field. The New Zealand team performs a Maori battle chant, challenging the Scottish players. After the Maori chant is done, the Scots stand for a moment, then lift up their kilts toward the New Zealanders in a show of nationalism, promoting a brand of Scotch Whiskey.

Clip Name: The Rant

Country: Canada

Running Time: 60 seconds

Description: A young Canadian man walks on to a stage in a large auditorium with a Canadian flag and other images projected on a background screen. He begins to address various clichés about the Canadian people, and explains the ways Canadians are different from Americans. As he builds in intensity, he ends the spot promoting Canadian beer with, “My name is Joe—and I am Canadian!”

### *Relationships Group Summaries*

Clip Name: Marry Me?

Country: China

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: The ad is in Chinese with English subtitles. A young couple sit in a McDonald’s restaurant, the male nervously commenting on the food (how fresh the french fries are, how cold the coke, etc.). He then hands the young woman a box of chicken wings, which she opens to find, instead of wings, a diamond engagement ring. A pause in the flow, then, “Where are the wings?” she asks.

Clip Name: Heads

Country: U.S.A.

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: A young computer-animated couple is dining at a table in the woman’s apartment, while the man rambles on about his work day. As the woman gets increasingly bored with the prattle, she rises, pulls the head off her dinner partner, and goes to her closet full of other animated men’s heads. After selecting a more romantic model, she places the new head on her dinner date. Her improved evening continues, with a marketing message that sometimes a change in furnishings helps.

Clip Name: Moving Van

Country: U.S.A.

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: A young woman is shown opening the back door of a moving van as it speeds down a busy four-lane highway. She begins to toss out boxes, furniture, golf clubs, and rolls a motorcycle out into the road, as following traffic swerves to avoid and hits the items. When the back of the van is empty, she climbs to the front of the van, where she looks innocently at the driving young man, and says, “What?” The marketing message was she needed to create room for new shoes now on sale.

Clip Name: Snoring

Country: Mexico

Running Time: 20 seconds

Description: An older man turns on the bedside lamp late at night, as his wife keeps him awake with her loud snoring. He reaches into a bed stand drawer and takes a chewable aspirin. He then splashes a glass of water into his wife's snoring mouth, which quiets her. The marketing hook: use chewable aspirin and save your water for other purposes.

### *Religion Group Summaries*

Clip Name: Pope

Country: Multi-country magazine ad

Running Time: Still photo

Description: A look-alike for the pope is purchasing condoms from a hallway vending machine. The marketing message is that the condoms are such high quality, that even the pope chooses them.

Clip Name: Rabbi

Country: Multi-country magazine ad

Running Time: Still photo

Description: A rabbi look-alike is sitting at a kitchen table, smearing a ham spread on a slice of bread. The marketing message is the ham spread is so delicious, even rabbis will eat it.

Clip Name: Priest & Nun

Country: Multi-country campaign

Running Time: Still photo

Description: As part of a series of *shock-ads* promoting brand awareness, this magazine photograph displays a Roman Catholic priest kissing a nun.

### *Self Image Group Summaries*

Clip Name: Popping

Country: U.S.A.

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: A friendly group of teenagers is driving around the city at night, in a moody ambience set by music and contemporary dancing moves. The marketing tactic seeks to have potential buyers associate that car model with the appealing atmosphere created by the commercial.

Clip Name: Odyssey

Country: U.K.

Running Time: 60 seconds

Description: A young man in a bleak and sparse apartment house opens a room door and begins running strongly and free, bursting through interior building walls. About midway through the run, a young woman joins in, also breaking through a series of walls. They pause a moment, exchange glances, then continue on with their run, through the last wall of the building, up a towering tree, then leaping free into open air. The marketing message is the runners' blue jeans give them freedom to move.

Clip Name: The Internet

Country: Global play on CNN

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: A montage of images, situations, nationalities, and demographics flit across the screen, with a high-tech music track, as spokespeople espouse on the multifaceted character of the Internet, as contributed to by an international service provider.

### *Sex Group Summaries*

Clip Name: Headache

Country: Brazil

Running Time: 40 seconds

Description: The spot is Brazilian Portuguese, with English subtitles. A couple is reading in bed, when the man turns romantically to the woman. "Not tonight, I have a headache," she says. The man then reaches over and offers the woman a diamond ring. "What do you mean by that? That I'm a prostitute?" the woman responds. Then, after a pause, "Or a nurse? Or a high school cheerleader in a skirt this short? Or a stewardess?"

Clip Name: Quick Soup

Country: U.K.

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: A man and woman in bed just finish having sex, the man grins and rolls over for a nap, and the woman gets up to go to the kitchen, just as the timer on the microwave oven preparing her soup hits the two-minute mark and shuts off. As she eats her two-minute soup, she shakes her head with a wry smile.

Clip Name: Proof

Country: U.K.

Running Time: 95 seconds

Description: An attractive woman saunters on to a stage, and says she is about to demonstrate how the lingerie she is wearing is the world's most erotic. As proof, she hops on and rides a mechanical bull, undulating in sensual and provocative motions. A matronly woman watches the display. Afterwards, the women invite the men in the audience to stand; suggesting the men—too embarrassed to stand—are proof of the lingerie's effect.



*Sports Group Summaries*

Clip Name: Anthem

Country: Poland

Running Time: 45 seconds

Description: Two raucous groups of opposing football (soccer) fans meet up at an alleyway intersection, and square off with one another in challenging stares. Suddenly a cell phone tone begins to play the Polish national anthem, and “in the spirit of the world cup” they soften and hug in the realization that a kindred commonality transcends rivalries.

Clip Name: Soccer

Country: U.S.A.

Running Time: 30

Description: A young man is facing a string of challengers on the soccer field, as he maneuvers to kick an impressive goal. The dreamy image fades into a man standing in a sporting goods store holding a soccer ball, and a pregnant women asks him, “And honey—if it’s a girl?” The dream image returns, this time with a girl kicking the winning goal.

Clip Name: Football

Country: Netherlands

Running Time: 60 seconds

Description: A group of young male athletes perform numerous feats and tricks with a soccer ball, with no narrative and music, other than the rhythmic pounding of the ball and feet. This continues for almost the full commercial with no marketing message at all, save for a sports logo in the last few seconds of the clip.

*Water Group Summaries*

Clip Name: Water

Country: U.S.A.

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: A hospital promotes itself as a healing environment with a series of dissolves though consistently water-themes images such as a saline drip, washing hands in a splashing sink, a whirlpool bath, an indoor tropical fountain enclosure, a fish aquarium, and dewdrops falling from a healthy leaf. Soothing music and a calming voice underscore the imagery.

Clip Name: Swimming

Country: Thailand

Running Time: 35 seconds

Description: In a televised swim competition with the crowd cheering, a swimmer passes past the video screen holding a fast-food sandwich aloft, taking a bite after alternating strokes, in a testimony to just how tasty the sandwich must be.

Clip Name: Seniors

Country: France

Running Time: 45 seconds

Description: As the narrator extols in French about the benefits of the advertised bottled water for good health, this commercial provides a glorified romp of water acrobatics performed by senior citizens enjoying an expansive and brilliantly adorned swimming pool, to an engaging music soundtrack of the Beach Boys' *Wouldn't it be Nice*.

Clip Name: Water Ballet

Country: France

Running Time: 45 seconds

Description: Another spot designed as above extolling the benefits of bottled water, this commercial features choreographed water acrobatics performed by digitally synchronized babies in a luxurious and brightly lit swimming pool, to a jazzy music soundtrack of "Bye Bye Baby."

Clip Name: Use Me Up

Country: USA

Running Time: 30 seconds

Description: To a bouncing musical background of the R&B classic "Use Me Up," young men and women frolic in and beside a large swimming pool, floating, splashing, dancing, batting a beach ball, while enjoying and 'using up' potato chips from a tubular can.

## Appendix D: Subject Group Descriptive Analyses

*Humor Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Neutral Dissonance

 $n = 235$  $\bar{x} = 4.5$ 

Median = 5.0

VAR = 3.3

 $\Sigma x = 1060$  $p < .001$ *Humor subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<b>“Fish Love”</b> $n = 47$ $\bar{x} = 5.6$ Median = 6.0 VAR = 1.7 $\Sigma x = 262$ $p < .001$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	<b>“Whassup”</b> $n = 47$ $\bar{x} = 5.7$ Median = 6.0 VAR = 2.4 $\Sigma x = 267$ $p < .001$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance
<b>“Love Kiss”</b> $n = 47$ $\bar{x} = 3.3$ Median = 3.0 VAR = 2.4 $\Sigma x = 155$ $p = .039$ Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance	<b>“The Haka”</b> $n = 47$ $\bar{x} = 4.1$ Median = 4.0 VAR = 3.5 $\Sigma x = 191$ $p < .001$ Clip Classification: Neutral Dissonance
<b>“Proof”</b> $n = 47$ $\bar{x} = 3.9$ Median = 4.0 VAR = 2.1 $\Sigma x = 185$ $p < .001$ Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance	

*Nationalism Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Neutral Dissonance

$n = 141$

$\bar{x} = 4.7$

Median = 5.0

VAR = 3.4

$\Sigma x = 667$

$p < .001$

*Nationalism subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<p><b>“American”</b></p> <p><math>n = 47</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 4.8</math></p> <p>Median = 5.0</p> <p>VAR = 3.9</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 224</math></p> <p><math>p &lt; .001</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Neutral Dissonance</p>	<p><b>“The Haka”</b></p> <p><math>n = 47</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 4.1</math></p> <p>Median = 4.0</p> <p>VAR = 3.5</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 191</math></p> <p><math>p &lt; .001</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Neutral Dissonance</p>
<p><b>“The Rant”</b></p> <p><math>n = 47</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 5.4</math></p> <p>Median = 6.0</p> <p>VAR = 2.0</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 252</math></p> <p><math>p &lt; .001</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>	

*Sex Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Neutral Resonance

$n = 141$

$\bar{x} = 4.5$

Median = 5.0

VAR = 2.3

$\Sigma x = 632$

$p < .001$

*Sex subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<p><b>“Headache”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.3</math>  Median = 4.0  VAR = 1.9  <math>\Sigma x = 202</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Quick Soup”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.2</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 2.1  <math>\Sigma x = 245</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>
<p><b>“Proof”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 3.9</math>  Median = 4.0  VAR = 2.1  <math>\Sigma x = 185</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>	

*Religion Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Neutral Resonance

$n = 141$

$\bar{x} = 4.1$

Median = 4.0

VAR = 2.3

$\Sigma x = 580$

$p < .001$

*Religion subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<p><b>“Pope”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.1</math>  Median = 4.0  VAR = 2.2  <math>\Sigma x = 194</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Rabbi”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 3.6</math>  Median = 4.0  VAR = 1.8  <math>\Sigma x = 171</math>  <math>p &lt; .01</math>  Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>
<p><b>“Priest &amp; Nun”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.6</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 2.6  <math>\Sigma x = 215</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>	

*Water Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Neutral Resonance

$n = 165$

$\bar{x} = 4.4$

Median = 5.0

VAR = 1.8

$\sum x = 734$

$p < .001$

*Water subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<p><b>“Water”</b>  <math>n = 30</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.0</math>  Median = 4.0  VAR = 1.2  <math>\sum x = 121</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Swimming”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.5</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 2.0  <math>\sum x = 210</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>
<p><b>“Seniors”</b>  <math>n = 30</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.3</math>  Median = 4.5  VAR = 2.8  <math>\sum x = 128</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Water Ballet”</b>  <math>n = 29</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.8</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 1.7  <math>\sum x = 139</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>
<p><b>“Use Me Up”</b>  <math>n = 29</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.7</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 1.0  <math>\sum x = 136</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>	

*Babies Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Resonance

$n = 141$

$\bar{x} = 5.7$

Median = 6.0

VAR = 1.7

$\Sigma x = 808$

$p < .001$

*Babies subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<p><b>“Sign Baby”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.8</math>  Median = 6.0  VAR = 1.9  <math>\Sigma x = 273</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Up &amp; Go”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.3</math>  Median = 6.0  VAR = 2.0  <math>\Sigma x = 251</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>
<p><b>“Cry Baby”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 6.0</math>  Median = 6.0  VAR = 1.0  <math>\Sigma x = 284</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>	



*Animals Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Resonance

$n = 141$

$\bar{x} = 5.7$

Median = 6.0

VAR = 2.0

$\Sigma x = 798$

$p < .001$

*Animals subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<p><b>“Peanut Butter”</b></p> <p><math>n = 47</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 5.4</math></p> <p>Median = 6.0</p> <p>VAR = 1.9</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 252</math></p> <p><math>p &lt; .001</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Confused Dog”</b></p> <p><math>n = 47</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 6.3</math></p> <p>Median = 7.0</p> <p>VAR = 1.1</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 297</math></p> <p><math>p &lt; .001</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>
<p><b>“Happy Cows”</b></p> <p><math>n = 10</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 4.0</math></p> <p>Median = 4.5</p> <p>VAR = 2.9</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 40</math></p> <p><math>p = .095</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Sprinkler”</b></p> <p><math>n = 37</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 5.6</math></p> <p>Median = 6.0</p> <p>VAR = 1.7</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 209</math></p> <p><math>p &lt; .001</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>

*Relationships Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Resonance

$n = 141$

$\bar{x} = 5.3$

Median = 6.0

VAR = 2.1

$\Sigma x = 754$

$p < .001$

*Relationships subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<p><b>“Marry Me?”</b></p> <p><math>n = 47</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 5.3</math></p> <p>Median = 5.0</p> <p>VAR = 1.5</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 248</math></p> <p><math>p &lt; .001</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Heads”</b></p> <p><math>n = 47</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 4.8</math></p> <p>Median = 5.0</p> <p>VAR = 2.2</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 227</math></p> <p><math>p &lt; .001</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>
<p><b>“Moving Van”</b></p> <p><math>n = 10</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 4.4</math></p> <p>Median = 5.0</p> <p>VAR = 1.8</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 44</math></p> <p><math>p &lt; .01</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Snoring”</b></p> <p><math>n = 37</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 6.1</math></p> <p>Median = 6.0</p> <p>VAR = 1.2</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 227</math></p> <p><math>p &lt; .001</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>

*Sports Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Resonance

$n = 141$

$\bar{x} = 5.5$

Median = 6.0

VAR = 1.8

$\Sigma x = 776$

$p < .001$

*Sports subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<p><b>“Anthem”</b></p> <p><math>n = 47</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 5.2</math></p> <p>Median = 5.0</p> <p>VAR = 1.9</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 243</math></p> <p><math>p &lt; .001</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Soccer”</b></p> <p><math>n = 47</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 5.4</math></p> <p>Median = 5.0</p> <p>VAR = 0.9</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 256</math></p> <p><math>p &lt; .001</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>
<p><b>“Football”</b></p> <p><math>n = 47</math></p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 5.9</math></p> <p>Median = 7.0</p> <p>VAR = 2.4</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 277</math></p> <p><math>p &lt; .001</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>	

*Self Image Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Resonance

$n = 188$

$\bar{x} = 5.0$

Median = 5.0

VAR = 2.4

$\Sigma x = 945$

$p < .001$

*Self image subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<p><b>“Popping”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.1</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 1.9  <math>\Sigma x = 238</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Odyssey”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.3</math>  Median = 6.0  VAR = 3.2  <math>\Sigma x = 250</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Dissonance</p>
<p><b>“The Internet”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.4</math>  Median = 4.0  VAR = 1.9  <math>\Sigma x = 205</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>	<p><b>“The Rant”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.4</math>  Median = 6.0  VAR = 2.0  <math>\Sigma x = 252</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>

*Life Cycle Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Resonance

$n = 141$

$\bar{x} = 5.1$

Median = 5.0

VAR = 2.3

$\Sigma x = 723$

$p < .001$

*Life cycle subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<p><b>“Old Man”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.0</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 1.4  <math>\Sigma x = 234</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Elevator Fantasy”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.0</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 2.4  <math>\Sigma x = 234</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>
<p><b>“Champagne”</b>  <math>n = 47</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.4</math>  Median = 6.0  VAR = 3.0  <math>\Sigma x = 255</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Dissonance</p>	

## Appendix E: Subject Group Comparisons

## Positive Resonance

<p><i>Babies Group Descriptive Analysis</i></p> <p>Group Classification: Positive Resonance  <math>n = 141</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.7</math>  Median = 6.0  VAR = 1.7  <math>\Sigma x = 808</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math></p>	<p><i>Animals Group Descriptive Analysis</i></p> <p>Group Classification: Positive Resonance  <math>n = 141</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.7</math>  Median = 6.0  VAR = 2.0  <math>\Sigma x = 798</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math></p>
<p><i>Relationships Group Descriptive Analysis</i></p> <p>Group Classification: Positive Resonance  <math>n = 141</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.3</math>  Median = 6.0  VAR = 2.1  <math>\Sigma x = 754</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math></p>	<p><i>Sports Group Descriptive Analysis</i></p> <p>Group Classification: Positive Resonance  <math>n = 141</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.5</math>  Median = 6.0  VAR = 1.8  <math>\Sigma x = 776</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math></p>
<p><i>Self Image Group Descriptive Analysis</i></p> <p>Group Classification: Positive Resonance  <math>n = 188</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.0</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 2.4  <math>\Sigma x = 945</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math></p>	<p><i>Life Cycle Group Descriptive Analysis</i></p> <p>Group Classification: Positive Resonance  <math>n = 141</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 5.1</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 2.3  <math>\Sigma x = 723</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math></p>

## Neutral Resonance and Dissonance

<p><i>Humor Group Descriptive Analysis</i></p> <p>Group Classification: Neutral Dissonance  <math>n = 235</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.5</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 3.3  <math>\Sigma x = 1060</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math></p>	<p><i>Nationalism Group Descriptive Analysis</i></p> <p>Group Classification: Neutral Dissonance  <math>n = 141</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.7</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 3.4  <math>\Sigma x = 667</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math></p>
<p><i>Sex Group Descriptive Analysis</i></p> <p>Group Classification: Neutral Resonance  <math>n = 141</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.5</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 2.3  <math>\Sigma x = 632</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math></p>	<p><i>Religion Group Descriptive Analysis</i></p> <p>Group Classification: Neutral Resonance  <math>n = 141</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.1</math>  Median = 4.0  VAR = 2.3  <math>\Sigma x = 580</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math></p>
<p><i>Water Group Descriptive Analysis</i></p> <p>Group Classification: Neutral Resonance  <math>n = 165</math>  <math>\bar{x} = 4.4</math>  Median = 5.0  VAR = 1.8  <math>\Sigma x = 734</math>  <math>p &lt; .001</math></p>	

## Appendix F: Instrument Reliability Data

*Comparison of results between written survey and oral follow-up for survey.*

<b>“American” (original)</b> $n = 10$ Median = 6.0 $\bar{x} = 5.3$ VAR = 5.0 $\sum x = 51$ Clip Classification: Positive Dissonance	<b>“American” (follow-up)</b> $n = 10$ Median = 5.0 $\bar{x} = 4.5$ VAR = 5.8 $\sum x = 45$ Clip Classification: Positive Dissonance
<b>“Up &amp; Go” (original)</b> $n = 10$ Median = 6.0 $\bar{x} = 6.2$ VAR = 0.8 $\sum x = 62$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	<b>“Up &amp; Go” (follow-up)</b> $n = 10$ Median = 6.0 $\bar{x} = 5.8$ VAR = 2.2 $\sum x = 58$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance
<b>“Confused Dog” (original)</b> $n = 10$ Median = 6.0 $\bar{x} = 5.8$ VAR = 1.5 $\sum x = 58$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	<b>“Confused Dog” (follow-up)</b> $n = 10$ Median = 6.0 $\bar{x} = 5.6$ VAR = 2.0 $\sum x = 56$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance
<b>“Popping” (original)</b> $n = 10$ Median = 5.5 $\bar{x} = 5.4$ VAR = 1.6 $\sum x = 54$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	<b>“Popping” (follow-up)</b> $n = 10$ Median = 5.0 $\bar{x} = 5.4$ VAR = 1.8 $\sum x = 54$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance
<b>“Old Man” (original)</b> $n = 10$ Median = 5.0 $\bar{x} = 5.1$ VAR = 1.7 $\sum x = 51$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	<b>“Old Man” (follow-up)</b> $n = 10$ Median = 4.0 $\bar{x} = 3.9$ VAR = 2.99 $\sum x = 51$ Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance
<b>“Water” (original)</b> $n = 10$ Median = 4.0 $\bar{x} = 4.2$ VAR = 1.7 $\sum x = 42$ Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance	<b>“Water” (follow-up)</b> $n = 10$ Median = 3.5 $\bar{x} = 3.6$ VAR = 1.6 $\sum x = 36$ Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance



## Appendix G: Pilot Study Descriptive Analyses

*Humor Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Dissonance

 $n = 30$ 

Median = 5.0

 $\bar{x} = 4.6$ 

VAR = 3.8

 $\Sigma x = 138$ *Humor subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<b>“Fish Love”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 5.5 $\bar{x} = 5.3$ VAR = 1.8 $\Sigma x = 53$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	<b>“Whassup”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 6.0 $\bar{x} = 5.2$ VAR = 5.3 $\Sigma x = 52$ Clip Classification: Positive Dissonance
<b>“Love Kiss”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 3.0 $\bar{x} = 3.3$ VAR = 2.2 $\Sigma x = 33$ Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance	

*Sex Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Neutral Resonance

 $n = 30$ 

Median = 4.5

 $\bar{x} = 4.1$ 

VAR = 2.3

 $\Sigma x = 123$ *Sex subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<b>“Headache”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 3.8 $\bar{x} = 4.0$ VAR = 1.1 $\Sigma x = 38$ Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance	<b>“Quick Soup”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 5.0 $\bar{x} = 4.6$ VAR = 2.3 $\Sigma x = 46$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance
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<b>“Proof”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 4.0 $\bar{x} = 3.9$ VAR = 3.9 $\Sigma x = 39$ Clip Classification: Neutral Dissonance	
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*Religion Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Neutral Resonance  
 $n = 30$   
Median = 4.5  
 $\bar{x} = 4.5$   
VAR = 2.5  
 $\Sigma x = 134$

*Religion subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<b>“Pope”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 4.5 $\bar{x} = 4.8$ VAR = 3.4 $\Sigma x = 44$ Clip Classification: Neutral Dissonance	<b>“Rabbi”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 4.0 $\bar{x} = 3.9$ VAR = 1.0 $\Sigma x = 39$ Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance
<b>“Priest &amp; Nun”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 5.5 $\bar{x} = 5.1$ VAR = 2.8 $\Sigma x = 51$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	

*Nationalism Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Neutral Dissonance  
 $n = 30$   
Median = 6.0  
 $\bar{x} = 5.0$   
VAR = 3.4  
 $\Sigma x = 149$

*Nationalism subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<b>“American”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 6.0 $\bar{x} = 5.3$ VAR = 5.0 $\Sigma x = 51$ Clip Classification: Positive Dissonance	<b>“The Haka”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 4.0 $\bar{x} = 4.2$ VAR = 3.3 $\Sigma x = 42$ Clip Classification: Neutral Dissonance
<b>“The Rant”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 6.0 $\bar{x} = 5.4$ VAR = 1.8 $\Sigma x = 51$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	

*Babies Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Resonance

$n = 30$

Median = 6.0

$\bar{x} = 6.2$

VAR = 1.0

$\Sigma x = 185$

*Babies subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<b>“Sign Baby”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 7.0 $\bar{x} = 6.4$ VAR = 1.6 $\Sigma x = 64$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	<b>“Up &amp; Go”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 6.0 $\bar{x} = 6.2$ VAR = 0.8 $\Sigma x = 62$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance
<b>“Cry Baby”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 6.0 $\bar{x} = 5.9$ VAR = 0.8 $\Sigma x = 59$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	

*Relationships Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Resonance

$n = 30$

Median = 5.5

$\bar{x} = 5.0$

VAR = 2.6

$\Sigma x = 151$

*Relationships subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<p><b>“Marry Me?”</b>  <math>n = 10</math>  Median = 6.0  <math>\bar{x} = 5.7</math>  VAR = 2.2  <math>\Sigma x = 57</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Heads”</b>  <math>n = 10</math>  Median = 6.0  <math>\bar{x} = 5.0</math>  VAR = 3.3  <math>\Sigma x = 50</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Dissonance</p>
<p><b>“Moving Van”</b>  <math>n = 10</math>  Median = 5.0  <math>\bar{x} = 4.4</math>  VAR = 1.8  <math>\Sigma x = 44</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>	

*Animals Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Resonance

$n = 30$

Median = 6.0

$\bar{x} = 5.3$

VAR = 2.9

$\Sigma x = 161$

*Animals subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<p><b>“Peanut Butter”</b>  <math>n = 10</math>  Median = 7.0  <math>\bar{x} = 6.3</math>  VAR = 1.6  <math>\Sigma x = 63</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Confused Dog”</b>  <math>n = 10</math>  Median = 6.0  <math>\bar{x} = 5.8</math>  VAR = 1.5  <math>\Sigma x = 58</math>  Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>
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<b>“Happy Cows”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 4.5 $\bar{x} = 4.0$ VAR = 2.9 $\Sigma x = 40$ Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance	
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*Sports Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Resonance

$n = 30$

Median = 6.0

$\bar{x} = 5.7$

VAR = 2.1

$\Sigma x = 170$

*Sports subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<b>“Anthem”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 6.0 $\bar{x} = 5.4$ VAR = 2.7 $\Sigma x = 54$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	<b>“Soccer”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 6.0 $\bar{x} = 5.5$ VAR = 1.6 $\Sigma x = 55$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance
<b>“Football”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 7.0 $\bar{x} = 6.1$ VAR = 2.1 $\Sigma x = 61$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	

*Self Image Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Resonance

$n = 30$

Median = 5.5

$\bar{x} = 5.5$

VAR = 1.5

$\Sigma x = 166$

*Self image subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<b>“Popping”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 5.5 $\bar{x} = 5.4$ VAR = 1.6 $\Sigma x = 54$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	<b>“Odyssey”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 7.0 $\bar{x} = 6.3$ VAR = 0.9 $\Sigma x = 63$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance
<b>“The Internet”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 5.0 $\bar{x} = 4.9$ VAR = 1.2 $\Sigma x = 49$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	

*Life Cycle Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Resonance  
 $n = 30$   
Median = 5.5  
 $\bar{x} = 5.1$   
VAR = 2.1  
 $\Sigma x = 154$

*Life cycle subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<b>“Old Man”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 5.0 $\bar{x} = 5.1$ VAR = 1.7 $\Sigma x = 51$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance	<b>“Elevator Fantasy”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 6.0 $\bar{x} = 5.8$ VAR = 0.6 $\Sigma x = 58$ Clip Classification: Positive Resonance
<b>“Champagne”</b> $n = 10$ Median = 5.5 $\bar{x} = 4.5$ VAR = 3.6 $\Sigma x = 45$ Clip Classification: Positive Dissonance	

*Water Group Descriptive Analysis*

Group Classification: Positive Resonance

$n = 30$

Median = 5.0

$\bar{x} = 4.5$

VAR = 2.5

$\Sigma x = 134$

*Water subgroup descriptive analyses.*

<p><b>“Water”</b></p> <p><math>n = 10</math></p> <p>Median = 4.0</p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 4.2</math></p> <p>VAR = 1.7</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 42</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Neutral Resonance</p>	<p><b>“Swimming”</b></p> <p><math>n = 10</math></p> <p>Median = 5.0</p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 4.4</math></p> <p>VAR = 2.3</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 44</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>
<p><b>“Seniors”</b></p> <p><math>n = 10</math></p> <p>Median = 5.0</p> <p><math>\bar{x} = 4.8</math></p> <p>VAR = 2.2</p> <p><math>\Sigma x = 48</math></p> <p>Clip Classification: Positive Resonance</p>	

## CURRICULUM VITAE

**Steven R. Van Hook****PROFESSIONAL HISTORY**

2004 - Current

**MBA PROGRAM FACULTY**, ELLIS COLLEGE OF NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY; New York, NY

- Instructor for online courses in Global Business, Managerial Marketing, and Business Communications.
- Trained and mentored new instructors.

8/01 - Current

**INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM FACULTY**, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA Santa Barbara, CA

- Developed and taught advertising, marketing, and communication courses for international students.
- Produced online course components.

10/2000 - Current

**MBA PROGRAM FACULTY**, Unext (Cardean University and Ellis College); Deerfield, Illinois

- Credentialed instructor for online courses in Business Communications, Managerial Marketing, and Global Management.
- Trained and mentored new instructors.

2002 -

**ADJUNCT FACULTY**, ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY

Santa Barbara, CA

- Developed and taught undergrad and graduate courses in Marketing and Global Economics.
- Provided training and support for low-residency online program. Taught online courses.

1991- Current

**PRESIDENT / OWNER**, WORLDWIDE MEDIA RELATIONS; Santa Barbara, California

- Clients have included Project Moscow Medicine, Amnesty International, United Nations Association, Viewers for Quality Television, Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce.



2/01 – Current

**INTERNET CONTENT DEVELOPER / SITE PRODUCER;** (formerly of Primedia; New York) AboutPublicRelations.net

- Public relations, marketing, communications, research and analysis.
- Winner of ExpertPR 2002 “Site Most Useful for PR Pros”

1997 – 2000

**PROJECT MANAGER / MEDIA DIRECTOR,** GAVIN ANDERSON & COMPANY / THE PBN COMPANY; Kiev, Ukraine

- Managed USAID public education program, oversight of \$3-million annual budget, staff of 50.
- Produced national television and radio programs, developed media campaigns.
- Directed LAN and Website development.

1993-1995

**MEDIA RELATIONS DIRECTOR,** KRIEBLE INSTITUTE; Washington, DC

- Obtained placements in prominent domestic and international media.
- Conducted communication seminars for Russian business and government leaders.
- Produced seminar training manual.

1992-1993

**TALK-SHOW HOST/PRODUCER,** KUHL-AM; Santa Maria, California

- Hosted/produced weekly radio talk show on business and community affairs.

1991-94

**GOVERNMENT ISSUES DIRECTOR,** SANTA MARIA VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE; California

- Researched local, state and national legislation affecting business community. Organized candidate forums.
- Prepared strategic communication campaigns, position papers, officer speeches, articles.

1989-1991

**BUREAU CHIEF/PRODUCER/CORRESPONDENT,** SUN WORLD NEWS MOSCOW; Washington, DC / Moscow, USSR

- Managed Moscow TV news bureau; supervised American and Russian staff.
- Coordinated advertising sales and marketing of Soviet publication *Literary Gazette International* in the United States.

1988-89

**NEWS DIRECTOR/ANCHOR**, KOTI-TV (NBC); Klamath Falls, Oregon

- Responsible for all news programming; managing division staff.
- Directed community outreach efforts.
- Anchored two evening newscasts.

1986-88

**BUREAU CHIEF**, KOB-TV (NBC); Roseburg and Coos Bay, Oregon

- Directed full news coverage efforts for tri-county region.
- Developed station promotion campaigns.
- Coordinated news stringers.

1984-86

**REPORTER/ANNOUNCER**, KLCC-FM; Eugene, Oregon

- Feature news reporting, announcer for morning "drive-time" newscast.

1984-86

**FEATURES WRITER**, OREGON DAILY EMERALD; Eugene, Oregon

- Investigative feature nominated for William Randolph Hearst Award.

1980-82

**VICE PRESIDENT**, JOSEPHINE COUNTY HEAD START PROGRAM; Grants Pass, Oregon

- Devised long-term policy, goals and strategy for implementation of federally supported Head Start services.
- Supervised financial expenditures.

1978-84

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**, SKILLS EXCHANGE; Grants Pass, Oregon

- Directed non-profit NGO serving low-income clients.
- Supervised volunteer and paid staff.
- Managed program budget and accounting, payroll, foundation reports, grant writing, board meetings. Coordinated interagency and community events.

1979-82

**COLUMNIST**, SOUTHERN OREGON REVIEW; Grants Pass, Oregon

- Voted among most popular features in 10,000 reader survey.

1978-80

**VISTA VOLUNTEER**; Grants Pass, Oregon

- Developed and directed non-profit NGO, organized board of directors, obtained funding.

**EDUCATION**

- PhD in Education, specialty in Transcultural Learning; Walden University (2005)
- M.A. Business Communications; Jones International University (2000)
- Telecommunications Series; Stanford University (2000)
- Technical Writing / Business Plans for Online Ventures; UCLA (2000)
- Certified in New Business Communications Technology; JIU (1999)
- Southern California Institute of Law; Contracts, Torts, Criminal Law (1996)
- B.A. Journalism; University of Oregon (1986)
- Culbertson Scholarship for Academic Excellence (1984-86)
- A.G.S. Humanities; Rogue Community College (1983)
- General studies, Santa Barbara City College (1976)