

## The Big Screen and Globalization

*The Cinema of Globalization: A Guide to Films about the New Economic Order.* By Tom Zaniello, Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2007, 224 pp., \$21.00/paper.

How should one approach the complex issue of globalization? Tom Zaniello, the director of the Honors Program at Northern Kentucky University, has assembled a worthwhile introduction to the central topics presently available in cinema. His thorough guide to films will appeal to a broad audience.

The preface includes his 14 indicators of globalization and key terms related to each: (1) transnational organizations (meaning the World Bank, WTO, and IMF in this context); (2) global labor (focused on migratory labor and human trafficking); (3) global capital (free movement of investment across national borders); (4) digitalization (conversion of images or data into a digital form for computer processing); (5) changes in the workplace; (6) outsourcing (contracting jobs to other, preferably, low-wage companies) and offshoring (moving the operation to another location while maintaining ownership within the company); (7) deregulation; (8) privatization (transferring a business enterprise from the government to the private sector); (9) oil; (10) scarce resources; (11) intellectual property rights (from copyrights to decoding DNA); (12) China (as Favored Trading Partner); (13) containerized shipping, export processing zones (also called free trade zones—where trade barriers may be negotiable to attract busi-

ness and foreign investment—often in a developing country), and (14) anti-globalization (examples include the anti-sweatshop movement, pure food activists, and open land and fishing rights organizations).

It is difficult to find a common definition of the term globalization, or even consensus about what constitutes globalization. Zaniello cites commonality he has with differing opinions of indicators of globalization from across the political spectrum. His balanced introduction acknowledges the views of centrist Thomas Friedman (“*Globalization is the integration of capital, technology, and information across national borders, in a way that is creating a single global market and, to some degree, a global village*”), Philippe Legrain from the right (“*Globalization is neither a label for Americanization, nor an excuse for worldwide corporate domination. It does not eliminate local cultures. Still less does it make governments irrelevant. It is a chance for mutual enrichment, not a route to global impoverishment*”), and Susan George from the left (“*Globalization is a political order made by and for transnational corporations*”).

The book is well organized for use as a reference source. There is a convenient alphabetical index of the 201 films presented at the beginning of the book, an alphabetical description of each movie with the appropriate globalization topic listed alphabetically at the beginning of each entry, and a topical index provided at the end. The topical index (67 headings) provides a breakdown for Frontline programs, animated films, mock documentaries, and must-see films (14) in addition to films categorized by topics (agribusiness, call centers, and Thatcherism, to name a few);

film availability is also addressed (most films are available online or on DVD) and websites are listed for distributors.

There is a recommended reading section at the end of each movie description. However, not all recommended readings are easily obtainable from an internet search. Many of the entries for this section were simply reviews for the particular movie. Readers may find the entries entertaining, but not all entries contribute to the globalization topic; for example, for the movie *Wall Street*, one of the recommended readings was a film critique of Daryl Hannah’s performance. On the plus side, Zaniello includes many useful sources (such as *Den of Thieves*, by James B. Stewart, presenting a non-fiction account of the insider trading scandals of the 1980s).

Whether you agree or disagree with the issues expressed in the films, Zaniello has presented a thorough and interesting way to pursue research on the complexities and controversies surrounding globalization in a unique manner. The entries ranged from the tragic *Fear and Trembling* (a Belgian woman commits career damaging cultural faux pas while working in Japan), and *Blue Vinyl* (a documentary about vinyl siding) to nonsensical *Zoolander* (“one of the first globalization comedies”—covering the topical global labor issue). For those readers with an interest in globalization from a variety of perspectives presented in a cinematic format, I heartily recommend this book. □

—Mary Faluszczyk  
Office of Field Operations  
Consumer Price Index  
Bureau of Labor Statistics