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GLOBALIZATION, VALUES, AND CONSUMER TRENDS:

A FRENCH AND USA COMPARISON

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A Thesis

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

in

Communication Studies

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by

Alexandre Hatlestad-Shey

September 2004

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September 2004

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## ABSTRACT

Perceptions of globalization, individual and nationalistic values, cultural products, and consumer choice between French and US nationals were investigated. In general, most values were similar between the two societies. The most prominent values of money and culture appeared to establish a base for diverging views on particular aspects of globalization. French respondents appeared to fear the decline of local, cultural goods, encouraged person-to-person communication through traveling and open borders, and stressed the importance of universal rights. American respondents appeared to fear increased outsourcing and pollution, likened international communication to the increased use of the Internet and the English language, and stressed the importance of peace. In regards to cultural products, French participants viewed Coca-Cola as nostalgia, a potential threat to French products, and an American business. Americans viewed Coca-Cola as American culture, a potential health risk, and an international business. Mecca-Cola, a Coke alternative, appeared to be accepted by some American consumers, while it was rejected by the French due to its mix of commerce and political philanthropy. French respondents disapproved

over the combination of consumer products with political ideologies, they emphasized the importance of socially responsible companies.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### A Global World

The events and actions of today's world reach far beyond language differences, physical barriers, and national boundaries. The degrees of separation around the world are shrinking. At the forefront of a changing world is one nation. The most significant social, political, and economic force shaping today's world is the United States (Kissinger, 1996). Along with such power, comes great responsibility, in all its dimensions. In many places around the world, there is much resentment towards the power one Nation can possess.

The United States is caught in between a world that is interested in and admires its capabilities and vision while simultaneously resents and fears its excessive strength and often, selfish implementation. Through its unparalleled military and submissive use of "soft power" and cultural products, the United States dominates the world militarily, politically, economically, and culturally. Accompanying this "hyperpower" status is a world scrutiny that analyzes

and attacks every move of America and its possible links to globalization.

The social phenomenon of globalization, although having been around since the opening of global communication channels over 100 years ago, is still a mystery. From a scholarly perspective, its definitions and explanations are split in half. While some promote and validate that globalization benefits societies and the world in general (Zwingle, 1992; Hill, 2002; Kroes, 1999), others argue that it widens social and economic gaps (Elliot, 1996; Hutton, 2003; Freire, 1997). Torn between beneficial versus harmful, the multi-colored shades of globalization make it extremely difficult to understand and predict its effects on the local and global community.

In addition to the positive and negative interpretations of globalization are the concepts of hybridization and homogenization. The opportunity to introduce and share new or old ideas and products on to the global stage has never been so feasible. Everything from religious beliefs to local produce can be shared and distributed to a world audience with relative ease. Similarly, the appearance and availability of McDonald's Restaurants and Coca-Cola products on every corner from

South Africa to Thailand to Brazil has also never been so prominent. In summary, it appears that while the world is opening up to a greater exchange of ideas and products, the United States has a large control of the distribution. It is between this dichotomy of hybridization (localized interpretation) and standardization (American influence), where globalization and its significance to the modern world can be found.

#### Purpose of Study

The following research will investigate how perceptions of globalization and local values differ between two similar cultures. As opposed to studying two completely different societies (developed versus less-developed for example), this research project compares two countries, France and the United States, which have a long and mixed history together (Hauteserre, 2001). This research serves as an investigative map tracking what globalization means within these two societies, and where these opinions and values converge and diverge. A convergence in values and perceptions of globalization will establish a common point, signaling where future communications and international relations can productively

focus. A divergence in values and perceptions of globalization will symbolize where the disparity occurs and what areas need to be dealt with more compassionately. While the international mood towards the United States continues to be in flux, these responses can hopefully highlight the commonalities and differences that will affect U.S. relations abroad. Hopefully this will provide better understanding and compassionate relations between both countries.

### Globalization

In today's world, the concept of globalization is actively and passively entwined in every person's life. Whether poor, rich, hailing from the North, South, East, or West, issues that once capsulated a local perspective, have now symbiotically evolved into an international relationship. Thinking or talking about globalization conjures up varying ideas, each as specific and detailed as the individual thinking them. But while the view of globalization is independently formulated, it is linked to several key terms: power, economics, social issues, and culture (Coon, 2000). Because of the complex nature of globalization, providing a firm definition is quite difficult. Often what comes to mind is the evolution of

local values and customs into a more global hybrid, for better or worse.

Zwingle (1999) defines globalization as an "inexact term for a wild assortment of changes in politics, business, health, entertainment" (p. 28). Another scholar assumes an even greater role for globalization since "almost all the major problems humanity confronts these days seem to require international solutions, from ethnic cleansing and other local wars to drugs, refugees, and terrorism" (Coon, 2000, p. 157). Mohamaddi (1997) links globalization as the catalyst for changes in social relationships because "relations of power and communication are stretched across the globe, involving compressions of time and space" (p. 3). As different perspectives concerning the meaning and effect of globalization spawn more and more questions, the ever-growing role of globalization becomes more apparent.

The concept of globalization is so gigantesque because it encapsulates so many facets and dimensions of society. As noted earlier, globalization is often associated with economic, political, and social agendas. Yoshikazu Sakamoto of the United Nations University (1994) concluded that since the end of the Cold War, globalization has been

pushing full force under the auspices of internationalization and democratization. Through internationalization, previously closed borders on national, regional, and societal levels become open. Democratization then transpires across class, race, ethnicity, and gender. Because of these ever-evolving changes within and amongst societies over issues of political, economic, social, and environmental ramification, globalization becomes more and more difficult to pinpoint.

For many cultures, globalization appears to be one of the main catalysts for evolving cultures and values. Elliot (1996) suggests that globalization symbolizes the growing inequality spreading around the world. A key component in globalization is the unrestricted opening of markets and trade between countries, which can in turn undermine the values and systems of the local culture (Hutton, 2003). In many instances, multinational conglomerates enter and replace smaller, domestic companies. Included in this transition is the importation of new business values, business language, and the shift in priority from worker/customer to manager/shareholder (Guyon & Hjelt, 2001). Economic realities of globalization can

force individuals to give up habits and benefits that are central to their belief system. In order to compete in expanded global markets, European work values have had to shift from an emphasis in quality (consummation) to quantity (consumption) (Kroes, 1999). Chua (2002) and Heisbourg (2000) expand on the role of globalization to link it to growing ethnic hatred around the world. From the Philippines to Rwanda and Brazil, the widening gap between the have and the have-nots equates to increasing hatred on the basis of not only economic disparity, but also ethnic rivalry. The evolution of a global culture creates threats to local identity and local harmony by introducing new locally insensitive, money-oriented value systems.

One of the most acclaimed educators of the last half-century (Kohl, 1997), Paulo Freire, found globalization to be an unstoppable movement that recklessly consumes everything in its path.

"It's a question of jumping on the train in the middle of the journey without discussing the conditions, the cultures, or the forms of production of the countries that are being swept

along...those who cannot compete simply disappear" (Freire, 1997, p. 113-114).

The spread of globalization calls upon the world to participate, while hastily paying limited attention to the needs and concerns of those involved.

In response, the opposing camp argues that globalization maintains two widely over-looked and seemingly opposite benefits: uniformity and local interpretation. Zwigle (1999) states that the unity of economic markets, dissolving international borders, and the creation of new computer-based environments introduces a new world in which problematic differences are replaced with simplified unity. The spread of globalization equates to the spread of qualities and ideals that benefit the world such as dynamism, human sympathy, and pragmatism (Klingberg, 1996). If the world will always be dominated by the groups that control resources vital to that era (Hill, 2002), at least the values of globalization are spreading economic uniformity and inclusion, as opposed to religious and political separatism. The second benefit is that globalization spreads ideals and products on a worldly scale, while allowing for local interpretation. Kroes



(1999) believes that through the process of hybridization, global products enter a new market or culture and evolve a new meaning beneficial to the local community. While the effects of globalization appear to be divided amongst the scholarly community, one major contributor appears to be the United States of America.

### Americanization

It has been our fate as a nation not to have ideologies, but to be one.

- Richard Hofstadter

One image that is often associated with globalization is Americanization. As globalization has altered the local and world system for the past century, there has been one culture at the helm of this powerful movement, the United States of America. The distinct involvement of the "American Way" in directing globalization has raised concern from many world societies. Hollander (1992) steps even farther to describe globalization as the "implicit endorsement of the political practices, social values, and cultural beliefs of the West, and pre-eminently the United States" (p. 444). Elliot (1996) more directly associates the route of globalization as the spread of American popular culture, American capital markets, and American

values. Of course, it cannot be denied that through being connected to the global economy, the livelihood has improved for many previously constrained by the traditional ways of the past. But a large portion of the world appears to link globalization with Americanization, and any discontent, thus, becomes focused on America.

As America maintains its lead at the forefront of globalization, uncertainty about the direction of global values and the future of local culture arise. In some cases, the exportation of Americanisms appears to be welcomed. Some schools of thought believe that "the people who experience products of the culture industry exercise considerable powers of selection and reinterpretation" (Griswold, 1992, p. 326; Kroes, 1999). A common argument often used to justify globalization stresses that no two countries with McDonald's Restaurants have ever been at war with each other. Prestowitz (2003) explains that this fantasy ended with Serbian repression in Kosovo. Defenders of local culture, argue that there is no real freedom from such a pre-existing order (Fiske, 1989). One main concern raised between these opposing views is how much space remains for local culture? In the hearts and minds of

people, is there enough room for modern and traditional, global and local to co-exist?

Zwingle (1999) argues that cultures change because both old and new tend to transform each other. If this is the case, further inquiry into what extent Americanization adds or changes a society is proposed. To facilitate a better understanding of the influence of globalization and Americanization, I will contextualize my investigation by comparing French and American values, interpretation of globalization, and consumer interests. Specifically, I will investigate French and American interpretations of Coca-Cola (the product and symbol) and its antithesis Mecca-Cola. Lastly, I will attempt to assess any connections between certain values and beliefs with consumer decisions. Before going any further, I would like to briefly provide a backdrop to globalization, by detailing its history and evolution over the past century.

### Cultural Hegemony

Cultural hegemony and cultural imperialism are concepts that have been at the forefront of societal change since the inception of society. From opposing tribes fighting over limited resources to the expansion of cultural products into, often oppositional, foreign

markets, the idea of one cultural group or idea dominating another is central to the human experience. Historically, the issue of imperialism and hegemony has been shaping societies since the beginning of time. More recent examples include the Roman Empire, the British Empire, and today's Western Empire (Americanization). Imperialism is "the practice of extending power and dominion of one nation over another by direct territorial acquisition or gaining indirect control over the other's political or economic life" (Kuklick, 2000, p. 505). Although differing in agency, location, and time, imperialism is the means by which modern boundaries and Nation-States have formed.

Cultural hegemony follows the same lines, but using a more subtle approach. Hegemony is a term to describe invisible relations of domination, involving not coercion but consent on the part of the dominated (Griswald, 1992). Former U.S. diplomat and Foreign Policy advisor Clyde Prestowitz (2003) explains that American hegemonic domination exists through coercion, seduction, and persuasion: coercion through military prowess, seduction through educational exportation, and persuasion through conglomerate marketing. Hegemony plays a vital role in the globalization movement because hegemonic relations

unknowingly exist as non-American countries consume American cultural products and they become widely popular and accepted.

The inclusion of American cultural products into foreign cultures has the potential to enhance its hegemonic domination. The cultural power of the United States is marked by its number one status in film and television exports in the world (Dean, 1997; Wagnleitner & May, 2000). As one of America's most famous diplomats, Henry Kissinger (1996) stated, America's role as the leader in globalization is secured through its domination of information. The communications revolution that the United States has hosted over the last two decades plays a significant role in the spreading of American popular culture, albeit intentionally or unintentionally (Kennedy, 1999). While militaristic and economic power generates domination, and its subsequent imperialism, they are not the most powerful instruments in the globalization movement. This clout is reserved for cultural hegemony and soft power secured through America's domination in spreading American culture through communication mediums of television, film, radio, print, and general commerce.

## Soft Power

The modern world is not defined by traditional types of power, such as that coming from the barrel of a gun. Instead, the "the bigger pay-off is getting others to want what you want" (Economist, 3/2002, p. 23). This ability comes through a concept known as "soft power". Both the Roman and British Empires realized that traditional hard power such as force was less successful than gradual, almost unknowing persuasion of soft power (Prestowitz, 2003). Kuisel (2000) defined soft power as "indirect, or co-optive, ways of getting others to do what you want by setting rules and offering an appealing ideology or culture" (p. 513). American soft power is spread through providing the world with an American experience. America succeeds in unifying the world under a certain global citizenship through marketing American television, American movies, American soft drinks, American music, American fast food, and American label shoes and clothes. "Consuming a commodity, even wearing a slogan, one signifies, to a certain degree, an identity" (Gitlin, p. 23). One of the most recognized symbols of Americana, and a prime example of soft power is the Coca-Cola Company.

## Coca-Cola

From simple carbonated beverage to becoming a world icon, few companies and products epitomize American culture like the Coca-Cola Company. From its inception in a small town in Georgia to world distribution, global familiarity and its 1.3 billion daily servings (Coca-Cola, 2003), Coke has truly become a global product. Its expansion over the last hundred years is unparalleled. In post-World War II Europe, many believed Coca-Cola's popularity was linked to its "identification with American virtues of freedom and ease" (Lloyd, 2000, p. 20). Drinking a Coke provided a momentary bridge into American culture and American values, an escape from poverty, and class and ethnic distinction, albeit only for a moment.

Moving ahead 50 years, speaking of the last Coca-Cola chairman, the Wall Street Journal (1997, October 24) stated that, "Presidents of the nation count for less than they used to...such a corporate chieftain (Coca-Cola) with vision...can have a larger impact on the world than even a two-term president" (p. 34). The power of Coke goes beyond personal dreaming and individualized escape, but has the ability to change cultures as a whole. While America might reflect an appealing culture of the land of opportunity and

freedom, companies will naturally promote cultural ideologies more conducive to consumerism and profit. The unfortunate part is that these goals are interested in neither preserving the local culture nor expanding global understanding.

A good look into Coke's perceptions of the world can be found through investigating its global marketing strategies. The evolution of the coca-cola global marketing campaigns has evolved with the trends of the times. As public opinion shifted, the Coca-Cola Company has adapted to accommodate changing markets. According to Marketing Week (2003) the Coca-Cola Company advertising styles and trends have gone through three major transitions to maintain consumer interest. The first installment during the sixties and seventies followed large-scale, uniform advertising techniques focusing on a think global, act global approach. In this form, Coke would sell products through images of homogenization and unity amongst world cultures. As a Beijing t-shirt once read, "I feel Coke". But as issues of cultural imperialism and U.S.A. capitalism began to blur Coke's presentation, the brand began to associate more with the think global, act local style. The third and current marketing style has evolved



to a think local, act local scheme, focusing on decentralizing management and enhancing the power of local markets. The resiliency of the Coca-Cola Company is undeniable.

In today's market, the Coca-Cola's recent chairman, Douglas Daft, recognized the difficulty in expanding sales due to its growing association with globalization. In a May 2000 speech, regarding anti-globalization and anti-Coke sentiment he recognized that,

"local governments and individuals responded with a renewed zeal for keeping control over their local politics, local culture and local products. The very forces that were making the world more connected and more homogeneous were simultaneously triggering a desire to preserve what was uniquely local" (Lloyd, p. 21).

Beyond this publicized explanation of renegotiating the power to the local markets and local interests, is the issue of money. Coca-Cola is a company that seeks profit, not cultural preservation.

According to the Coca-Cola Company (2004), sales for 2003 reached \$21 billion, with 70% of sales existing outside of the United States. With a saturated U.S.A.

market and high concentrations of revenues in non-U.S.A. markets, Coca Cola must continue expanding its international shares. Currently the Coca Cola Company is investing heavily in advertising in India and Indonesia. Associating the American image of success with drinking a Coke, these populations are gradually being waned off tea and other traditional, local beverages (Barber, 1996). The evolution of its marketing scheme exemplifies its chameleon nature, adapting to any market, however and wherever it can.

Despite Mr. Daft's understanding of world sentiment, an increasing amount of resentment and action in regards to the Coca-Cola Company's power to challenge tradition and in the end alter cultures are surfacing.

#### Mecca-Cola

Recently, a new anti-globalization movement has been created and marketed by a French-Arab businessman under the name of "Mecca Cola". In a world where markets are controlled by conglomerates and brand names, smaller-based substitutes and imitations might be created to fulfill a consumer need and a political point. Not only does Mecca Coke symbolize anti-American globalization, but it also tastes strikingly similar to its nemesis. As Mathlouthi

(2003), founder of Mecca Coke, points out from a conversation with his son, "Papa, I agreed not to drink coke, but you have to give me something" (Zambezi Times, 2003, March 20), suppressing a consumer want is difficult, but replacing is possible. Now he is trying to fulfill increasing demand for his product. With each purchase, customers get the satisfaction that they are not supporting American globalization and 20% of the product goes to humanitarian works. The social responsibility of Mecca Coke is the strongest quality it possesses and openly advertises. While anti-globalization uproar increases, does the future involve more socially responsible corporations and products that pay more attention to local communities and their value systems?

#### Globalization and Values

In an era of global communities, communication values transcend time and distance like never before. Through whatever medium, values can be introduced to cultures both directly and indirectly. Unfortunately, these values are often not welcome and can cause harmful repercussions.

Possibly one of the most horrendous acts of anti-globalization, and especially anti-American sentiment took place in the heart of America. September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001

represented a moment in history when the world never seemed so tightly bound under grief and apprehension. For those that created such destruction and those that endured it, there was a devastating gap separating what both causes valued. Interpretations of these values differ greatly from country to country, culture to culture and can be a catalyst for great misunderstanding, polarization, and even destruction.

In response to such a dreadful moment in history, the United States government implemented what it felt was a proper way to combat the event. The State Department produced what is known as the Doctrine of Integration. The doctrine was created to persuade governments and people to join in the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity under a common values system (Prestowitz, 2003). State Department Policy Planning Director Richard Haas defined these values as "rule of law, limits on the power of the state, respect for women, private property, equal justice, and religious tolerance" (Haas lecture, 2002, April 22). This type of response from America's most important international department appeared to be extremely one-sided and even hegemonic.

Beyond such direct value inducing measures, American values tend to be more successfully transferred through popular culture and its corresponding products. Gitlin (1998) found American movies, television, and music to consistently reveal values of freedom, upward mobility, informality, egalitarian irreverence, and vital life-force. In terms of cultural products, Kroes (1999) uncovered Coca-Cola to be the symbol of ultimate freedom because it "undercut parental authority and cultural guardianship, promising the instant gratification of desire rather than its sublimation" (p. 467). Whether prompted by chaotic events or trickling through the consumption of American products, often little consideration is given as to how such values will be received and interpreted.

Outside of the American bubble, many world leaders and citizens consistently argue against the spread of American values and beliefs. Former French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine stated that "America can inspire the dreams and desires of others thanks to its dominance in global images" (Prestowitz, p. 42). Hong Kong's Securities and Exchange Director Andrew Sheng asserted, "American values can only thrive with huge resources at your beck and call. If we assume that what you have in the United States can be had

by all...if everyone consumed like Americans it would be an environmental disaster" (Prestowitz, p. 42). A survey conducted among eight hundred top business leaders from the Asia-Pacific region sought to find out the most dangerous threat to regional security. The first response was terrorism (60%) and the second was American Hegemony (30%) (Prestowitz, 2003). Apprehension over the Americanization of local values appears to continue to grow strong.

#### Americanization in France

While many countries are in opposition to the proliferation of American values, no other country is as critical as France. Recently conducted world surveys and local polls revealed that France consistently ranks among the top in maintaining a general resentment towards the spread of American values and customs (i.e., The Pew Global Attitudes Project, 2002; World Values Survey, 2000). In a range of fairly recent polls looking specifically at French sentiment towards globalization, the French citizens were suspicious of globalization (72%), thought it was the direct cause of the worsening of social inequalities (65%), and believed it threatened French identity (56%) (Le Monde, 2000; BVA, 1999; Canal Ispos, 1998). A United States government sponsored-survey of world perceptions of

globalization found the French to overwhelmingly associate globalization with "U.S.A. dominance" (Department of State, November 20, 2000). 75% of French respondents would willingly boycott American products in the event of a US-French conflict (Le Monde, 2000). The results of the polls and surveys hint at two possible explanations: France is overwhelmingly opposed to the US influence in France and Europe and/or France is overwhelmed by its shrinking role in world determination.

### The French

The French were selected for this investigation because they have typically been associated with anti-American feeling. Two years ago, the prime minister of France, Lionel Jospin, publicly announced that 'We must defend a cultural exception' - an idea that culture, particularly French culture, needs protection from market forces (Economist, 4/2002). In 1999, Jose Bove, a union organizer and cultural defender of the French, led the destruction of a half-built McDonalds in a small French town. At the start of his trial, 30,000 people showed up in support (Europe, 2000). In addition, the president, the prime minister, and even the prosecutor voiced sympathy for his cause (Rocca, 2000). Rocca (2000) reveals that

"France's support for Bove bespeaks a pervasive anxiety there that American influence is destroying the native culture" (p. 34). When surveyed about defending local culture (against globalization), the most important elements of French identity included language (30%), public services (24%), culture (24%), and food (21%) (BVA, 1999).

Such an anti-America or anti-globalization movement has been part of Frances' psyche for quite some time.

"Perhaps it is thanks to that history that France sees itself at the forefront of the struggle to maintain a national identity against the blurring forces of American power and international trade. From the days of De Gaulle, onwards, every modern French leader has presented France as being somehow involved not in collaboration with America but in competition with it" (Andrews, 2000, p. 17).

Such a history is the 300 year-old economy founded on strict markets and highly selective importation laws (Andrews, 2000).

Evolving to the present day, the French have continually been leaders in preserving French culture and language. Now their cause has widened to involve cultural,



political, and economic restrictions in a last minute effort to slow the pace of globalization. Numerous associations have been formed to address the various issues of globalization. These organizations, composed from both the public and private sectors, have been at the forefront of strengthening local power in order to diminish the global squeeze. Bove fights for the preservation of local agriculture and the French cuisinary lifestyle in general. Many chambers of commerce have formed associations of historic cafes to seek protection from expanding chains such as McDonalds and Starbucks (Yang, D. J., 2001). The point is not to stop Hollywood, McDonalds, or Coca-Cola but to ensure the survival of French cinema, French cuisine, and French lifestyle (Europe, 2000; Yang, 2001).

As Hauteserre (2001) suggests, although the cultural values between the United States and France are similar in many respects, the socialization paradigms are different. The particular cultures in France and the United States create specific values, which in turn help dictate one code of behavior over another (Samovar & Porter, 2003). In the circumstance of France and its people, the issue might revolve around the possibility that either willingly or not, America is changing these patterns of lifestyle

behavior in the French public. The "magic" of Disney, the "ease" of McDonalds and the "freedom" of Coca-Cola are marketing tools that help facilitate these changes. They help create a feeling or a sense of identity that adapts to the intended European (national or local) culture(s) (Subramanian, 1998). Although an argument for the hybridization of culture would highlight the benefits of these brands in the French culture, the current identity and meaning associated with these products carries a highly negative stigma.

Discovering the line between French and American similarities and differences in terms of values and consumer interests can help explain if and how globalization compares within these two countries. Seeing as the French have historically been against Americanization, they make an ideal unit of analysis with which to compare the influence of globalization and the impact of American cultural products on the French landscape.

### Consumer Values

Due to the consumer nature of Americanization, the power often appears to be in the hands of the consumer. As mentioned earlier, products symbolic of the American way,

such as Coca-Cola and McDonalds, are often the first to be attacked during anti-globalization protests. Yet seeing as these are consumer products, the success and livelihood of Coca-Cola and McDonalds depends on if the product is purchased. Consumer trends and the consumers' decisions play key roles in determining a significant part of how much globalization becomes a part of their society.

Research in the area of consumer behavior and corporate responsibility has occurred in a variety of settings with a multitude of products. Maignan's (2001) cross-cultural study of corporate responsibility and consumer behavior found that the U.S. market is much more concerned with economic responsibility, while France and Germany place higher value on legal and ethical standards. In addition, the European countries appeared to favor more philanthropic oriented-corporations. Other researchers and company executives such as Popcorn, Yankelovich, and Gordon (1992) and Mathlouthi (2003) believe that (US) consumer choices will be determined by the products, themselves, in addition to the ethics of the company. If the company and its products reflect anti-environmental production, poor working conditions, or unpopular values (social, economic, and/or political), the consumer has the power and the

choice to redirect their purchasing power. Currently, there has been an insufficient amount of research attempting to establish links between cultural products, values, and perceptions about globalization.

#### Claim

The concept of globalization is a balancing act between tradition and modernization. America is often seen as a major source of modernization and change. Associating this change to imperialism is not correct. "Culture is constructed through consumption, not just production" (Howes, 1996, p.8). The choice still remains with the consumer, a fact that is often forgotten.

Because globalization is an event or movement that transcends borders and governments (Chan & McIntyre, 2002), its force relies on soft power and its cultural products. Corporations, such as Coca-Cola and McDonalds have been controlling the markets and unknowingly instigating the evolution of local values and customs. Measuring which direction these values tend to flow (local, global, or hybrid) is extremely difficult. Instead, current research has only revealed that the majority of the world does not want their traditional value system to be modernized from

imposing corporations (The Pew Global Attitudes Project, 2002; Inglehart & Baker, 2000).

Corporations like McDonalds and Coke are often the first symbols to be associated with Americanization or Globalization. In response, anti-globalization movements terrorize McDonalds restaurants and Coke vending machines to reflect their anger and disapproval. But in many cases, the opening of a new McDonalds restaurant or the expansion of Coke products to previously unavailable markets reflects the spread of *free markets* (Chua, 2002). The symbolic nature and cultural power of these products can be interpreted in a variety of ways. The question then, asks what associations do consumers form between brands and the local and global influences they possess? Why does such a dichotomy exist between resentment for the symbol and meaning associated with a product, and the continued desire to purchase it?

#### Past Research

The broad nature of globalization has conjured up many questions in the academic community. In response, a wide variety of research coming from a full gamete of perspectives has taken place.

Herriot and Scott-Jackson's (2002) research investigated the role globalization played in shifting social identities within the employment setting. Their data found that two major outcomes of globalization, inequalities and individualism, had resounding effects on the shifting of self. Thus altering the emphasis from social identities to personal identities. Self-satisfying values brought on from an increasing consumerist lifestyle.

Friedman (2000) personalized the evolution towards values of globalization as a shift from local and traditional to a more international and progressive orientation. He exemplifies his point through expressing that youth of traditional cultures take on the sentiment of their quickly changing environments, often to the detriment of the original. A Chinese father explains that,

"My son is an expert on the Internet. Whenever he comes across something interesting on the Internet he shows it to me. But fathers should not be guided by sons. The father should not listen to the son. It undermines authority. I told my son to read the Internet less and study more" (Friedman, p. 396).

The key concern appears to be the unrestricted exposure of global ideas over the weakening philosophy of the local environment. Meanwhile, other researchers expand the issue of globalization to a larger scale.

Kacowicz (1998) argued that globalization is in constant flux with issues of regionalization and nationalism. It appears that under the pressure of globalization, support for nationalism is moving into more alternative forms of loyalty and identity; often found in cultural products and activities.

Inglehart's (2000) longitudinal world survey of more than sixty societies found several correlations between individual values and issues of globalization. Key results appeared to reveal that, 1) economic development is positively related to human life expectancy and human happiness, 2) evolving role for religion, 3) shift away from materialistic values towards post-modern values. In the face of globalization, changes in belief systems, life expectancy and happiness occur as a result of shifting socio-economic status.

While research has spanned most aspects of globalization from regionalism to materialism, it traditionally has a wide scope and limited depth. Often

the shortcomings evolve from limited population groups, context, and methods. In regards to research populations, there is often an emphasis on comparing groups or organizations that are in opposing social or economic levels. The balance or imbalance between the have and have-nots of much globalization research appears to be a reoccurring theme. Through learning how two culturally dominant societies relate to each other, more understanding can be obtained about the trickle down flow of culture to other societies.

Very little research has sought interviews or taken the time to conduct open-ended questioning. While time consuming and complex in its analysis, the qualitative approach places the participants' first-hand experience in the center of the research.

In a contextual sense, most of the academic research focuses specifically on the economic events and consequences around globalization. Naturally, issues concerning the global economy and expanding world markets play central roles in globalization. But often, the social and cultural analysis is sidetracked or absent. Instead, more research should focus on how different societies



perceive each other and the possible role that globalization might play in their relations.

Methodologically, few reports have concentrated on the recipients' interpretation and general feeling about the ramifications of globalization on a local, cultural level; especially between two countries that are economically and socially quite similar. In addition, much of the data is based on scholarly opinion about how people interpret symbols and products of globalization, without ever asking the recipients themselves. Much of the research has taken quantitative approaches to interpreting behavior or feeling that is often better explained through the participants' own words. Because the concepts are so broad and subjective to individual scrutiny, they should be researched in a qualitative manner.

Due to the emerging role of consumerism in most industrialized societies, concepts of globalization and consumer power are extremely intertwined in the culture(s) of today's world. So, as the role of consumerism is growing stronger throughout most modern societies (Howes, 19996; Maignan, 2001) values are shifting. Such a relationship between consumerism and culture might be simultaneously linked with the values people possess and

the choices they make. The reciprocal nature between values and choices creates the possibility that choices and values reflect each other. The social world individuals take part in, is defined by the choices they make. Their values can affect those choices. Due to the difficulty in assessing the direct causes of these changes, the proposed research will instead investigate the relationships between cultural values, consumer choices, and perceptions of globalization.

#### Proposed Research and Variables

In this study, I plan to investigate how American and French National participants perceive various topics including: their own individual and National value system, the other Nationalities' value system, globalization, cultural products, and consumer choices. The reasoning to investigate these four variables is based on the concept that a person's value system might reflect how they interpret issues of globalization. Current discontent over globalization often evolves out of the thought that American and other international products can ruin the local cultural landscape. Through the distribution of American cultural products around the world, America opens

itself to the scrutiny of countries such as France. In response, the choices French consumers make might reflect if they actively or consciously manage their decisions for the benefit of the local culture.

A country with a long history of anti-globalization/anti-American sentiment, such as France, will more likely express anti-globalization values and thinking. It is then assumed that French culture will push for the preservation of local culture and the restriction of international (American) influences. France's current anti-globalization stance should be highlighted by values stressing preservation and local culture.

From the American perspective, beliefs that their products and companies are truly international will serve as justification for their unrestricted spread. Due to the combination of America's global power and beliefs such as the "American Dream", Americans might perceive that other societies benefit and need American products and thinking. Thus from an American perspective, values that make up the American landscape will be equally important for other countries and cultures.

Somewhere in the middle, between both American and French societies, are values and consumer beliefs that

explain each culture's reasoning and action. The following research hopes to discover a mid-point, where these two cultures converge and diverge in both local and global values and understanding.

### Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis and data collection will be American and French citizens. Citizens will be considered individuals that were born in the United States or France. Age and other defining characteristics will be relevant in this study in order to deduce any possible associations between values and consumer opinions and demographic details. For the purpose of expediency non-random sampling was used in both countries; no restrictions were placed on the participants other than citizenship requirement.

### Hypotheses

#### French Perspectives

- HF1: Popular culture items will be perceived as having negative effects on French culture.
- HF2: French will be more inclined to perceive anti-globalization products (Mecca Coke) as beneficial to the world.

## American Perspectives

HA3: Americans will perceive European cultures to have the same values as America.

HA4: Americans will perceive anti-globalization products (Mecca Coke) as harmful and deceiving to the world.

HA5: Popular culture items will be perceived as having positive effects on American culture..

## CHAPTER TWO

### METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

For the purpose of assessing the significance, if any, between values, consumer choices, and globalization, the researcher used a combination of qualitative and quantitative procedures. Due to the large nature of various concepts within this project, such as globalization and national and individual values, different levels of analysis were needed. Through employing both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, participant responses could be statistically compared and contrasted, while open-ended responses would allow for more deep and personalized explanation. Combining these two methods with the framework of the survey provided a medium for attaining both generalized data and personalized explanation.

In order to obtain responses from French participants, the survey was translated into French.<sup>1</sup> The American version of the survey was translated into French by native speaker Godiva Pizzurro. A native French speaker of 50 years, she has had experience in informal document

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<sup>1</sup> The American version of the survey was translated into French by native speaker Godiva Pizzurro.

translation in the UC library cataloging system. This was a direct translation. The French version of the survey was tested on several native speakers to assess general comprehensibility. Upon completion of the French version of the survey, qualitative responses were also translated.<sup>2</sup>

### Population

The two main participant groups focused in this investigation were French Nationals and United States Nationals. A sample size of 101 French participants and 101 American participants was obtained in their respected countries. Due to the nature of the survey and its need for a broad spectrum of people and opinions, the convenience sample was employed in various regions and situations.

The French participants were introduced to the research during a two-week cross-country trip through France in the summer of 2003. Throughout 6 major cities and 4 smaller municipalities, French participants were selected using convenience sampling. A major effort was used to approach participants in areas and times of day in which they would have ample time to respond to the survey.

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<sup>2</sup> Translated by Godiva Pizzurro.

For example, major commuting corridors (subway stations) and shopping areas were avoided while parks and community areas were emphasized.

The United States population focused on Southern California spanning from the coastal communities of Santa Monica and Long Beach to the inland cities of Riverside and San Bernardino. Potential participants were approached in public and private settings. Due to the initial unenthusiastic response of people unwilling to fill out the survey, prospective participant areas expanded from parks and community areas to include beaches, universities, and shopping areas.

The survey was given to each participant and returned the same day. Each potential participant was questioned on his/her Nationality. Once the Nationality was verified and he/she agreed to take the survey, unlimited time was given for completion. The typical duration for completing one survey was around 20 minutes. As soon as all the surveys from both participant pools had been returned, the data was analyzed for any possible associations or links within and/or between the two national groups.

Within the analysis section for the purpose of organization participants were referred by their



chronological number. The French participants were given numbers 1 through 101. All American participants were given numbers 102 to 203. No identification numbers were repeated. In order to more easily indicate to readers the correct participant group, an F was added to French participant numbers and an A was added to American participant numbers. A French participant numbered 135 was listed as F135 in the analysis section. Similarly, an American participant numbered 157 will be listed as A157.

#### Instrumentation

The survey composed for this research is a combination of qualitative and quantitative surveying tools. The survey is divided into four sections equaling four pages. These sections include globalization, personal and national values, cultural products, and consumer opinion. Each section uses a quantitative and qualitative approach.

The quantitative part assesses participants' opinions through five point likert-type scales and basic multiple-choice questions. The five point likert-type scales focus on the degree of importance of 11 values (compiled from the World Values Survey and Pew Research Center), the positive/negative effects of 5 cultural products, and the

importance of socially responsible companies. The multiple-choice questions assessed basic background information and reiterated questions about corporate responsibility and globalization. These statistics allowed for a common data set to emerge between the two populations.

The open-ended section of the survey focused on interpretations of globalization, national values, cultural products, and consumer decision-making. Participants were asked to explain, 1) what is globalization, 2) what are the national values for France and the United States, 3) what do the cultural products (Coca-Cola and Mecca Coke) represent to them, and 4) which are they more inclined to purchase. The open-ended nature of these questions allowed for participants to freely express how they feel about the key concepts. Through combining quantitative data sets and qualitative explanations, this research compared how two cultures (French and American) converge and diverge in their value systems, perceptions of each other, consumer ethics, and general interpretation(s) of globalization.

## Data Analysis Procedures

Once all 202 surveys were collected data analysis began. Due to the somewhat long nature of the survey, numerous surveys for both participant groups were incomplete. Often, these discrepancies were present in the qualitative section(s). In other instances, participants did not complete sections or the entirety of the quantitative section(s). To take such discrepancies into account, each individual section of the survey was calculated independently as to avoid any possible imbalance between response rates. A section was deemed usable for analysis if it was totally completed or nearly completed (i.e., 8 out of 10 responses).

These resulting 202 surveys were analyzed using both a statistical computer program and an inter-coder categorizing scheme. The open-ended questions presented numerous responses that required more acute and personalized attention and scrutiny. The quantifiable data sets were statistically evaluated for average responses and possible significance levels.

Quantitatively, the variables assessed included importance in particular values, effects of cultural products, and corporate responsibility. In order to

compare differences in mean scores for these variables between the two Nationalities an independent samples t-test was employed. All statistical data was analyzed through SPSS Version 11.5 software. Each possible response was allotted a corresponding number. All numbers within the French participant pool and American participant pool were then averaged. In addition to the means, t-values were attained to give a sense of whether there was a pattern within the data set, and thus within the participant groups.

The open-ended questions took a slightly different approach through the use of inter-coder categorizing. In order to avoid as much as possible the potential biased interpretations of the main researcher, two additional coders were utilized. After being instructed on the general framework of the research, each coder was given his own complete copy of all open-ended responses. The data set was split into four sections. These four sections involved basic questions about Globalization, National values for France and the United States, cultural products, and consumer inclination. Specifically, the participants' questions were:

1. In your opinion, what is globalization and how does it affect you?
2. What do you think are the most important values in America and in France?
3. What does Coca-Cola signify to you?
4. Would you be inclined to buy Mecca-Cola? Why?

The coders were introduced to the general research idea on perceptions of globalization and values between two national groups. The categories that were established as a framework to work within were economic, social, political, and other. Under these major topical categories, each coder was asked to evaluate and rate data to establish patterns and subcategories within each of the four major topical categories.

Each coder was given 155 individual slips of paper with data consisting of participants' interpretations about globalization. All responses were mixed (French with American) in order to avoid any possible pre-disposed assumptions or stereotypes about either nationality. This section required the most analysis because of the numerous contexts and multi-leveled responses. To facilitate the variety of responses, numerous subcategories were created

beyond the original themes on economic, social, and political. Within these subcategories were responses that could have different contexts but pertain to the same general idea. A common example came from inter-related issues like studying abroad and importing/exporting products; both independently listed under the "exchange" category. Using this method, most responses were listed under categories such as exchange, hybridization, communication, international relations, politics, economics, standardization, and competition.

The values section revealed an extensive list well beyond the economic, social, and political boundaries. Many different values such as work, employment, and job were placed into the same category because they all revealed the same, basic concept.

For the sections concerning Coca-Cola, all interpretations were categorized as beverage, emotion, or business. Each coder was given 180 individual interpretations about Coca-Cola and placed each response in the appropriate category.

The section involving Mecca-Cola was categorized into "interest for the product - yes" and "disinterest in the product - no" responses. There were a total of 157

responses each coder categorized. Each response (yes or no) was followed by the participant's reasoning and is fully explained in the results section.

Each coder took home the four data sets and categorized each section through analyzing which themes, values, or opinions appeared to consistently emerge. Each coder wrote down what areas he thought were consistently appearing from the data sets. Values were written down on a list and then numerically counted, to find the most consistent values. The globalization list was a catalog of reoccurring themes found within the data. The Coça-Cola data sets were listed into one of three categories: beverage, emotion, or business. The Mecca-Cola data sets were categorized by yes or no indicators. Once all sections were independently analyzed by the three coders, they met and discussed their findings. A compilation of their categories was formed and is used as the final interpretation for the open-ended questions. Based on the assembled list, consistent differences found between both French and American participant responses were highlighted. All findings between both the French and American participant groups are explained in the following section.

## CHAPTER THREE

### ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

The compilation of the statistical analysis and the open-ended categories intertwine and compliment each other. The following findings are organized such that globalization, values, cultural products, and consumer choices reflect off each other.

#### Globalization

As a quick glance at the word might reveal, the term globalization conjures up a range of definitions and concepts. Managing these extensive characterizations, although time consuming, revealed several consistent and clear categories. Categories that evolved from the 200-odd responses included the flow of ideas, products, people, culture in political, economic and social contexts. More specifically, the categories found within the research included standardization and hybridization (cultural, political, economic), communication, international relations, economics, power struggles, and competition.



## Standardization

The first major category the research highlighted was standardization and hybridization/exchange. While some believed globalization to be the standardization of products, culture, and the economy, others likened it to the exchange and spread of ideas and products. Both revolve around the spread of culture, but vary in the degrees of sender and receiver.

Standardization was a common term used to describe the reduction of a variety of cultural differences. It appears that both French and American participant groups found standardization to occur economically and culturally. F49 explained that, "globalization is the liberalization of commercial exchanges throughout the world, standardizing products, creating fewer independent societies." A177 also pointed out that, "you find the same products throughout the whole world, no matter where, although reassuring when you travel, it lacks originality." While examples of standardization could be found within both participant groups, the French participants stood-out in regards to the effects that standardization has on their own culture.

Specifically, numerous French participants indicated that standardization leads to a loss of autonomy and local identity. F27 explained that,

"Little by little, globalization is taking away our culture, in terms of alimentation, how we dress, and our way of thinking towards the profit of the U.S.A. culture. It is standardization on all levels."

F33 adds that,

"A few countries decide for the 5 billion individuals, for their own profit, and very soon we will eat the same, look the same, think the same, we risk loosing our own identity."

In both circumstances, it appeared that numerous French participants were not pleased at the direction globalization was taking their local culture and traditions.

#### Hybridization/Exchange

While numerous participants dwelled on the loss of culture and autonomy to globalization, others found a completely opposite approach highlighting the exchange and assimilation that is occurring in all levels of society. A large group of respondents indicated that globalization is

the flow of culture, economics (products), and ideas (political and non). F3 described globalization as "the liberation of the borders, the flux of communication, opinions, and investments. It implies the idea of a world without differences." A148 added that "globalization is the exchange of trade, economics, ideas, and culture between countries all over the planet." A204 found particular benefit from an educational perspective, "when people from different cultures come together and learn about each others' cultures, diversity is created." Throughout most of the examples about exchange and hybridization, the concept of mutual exchange and sharing appeared to be at the center of globalization.

Several French participants highlighted the spread of science and technology as a major part of globalization. F36 explained that "it is a process of integration, within economies, cultures, politics, and technology." More specifically, F46 added, "we are able to get more technical things and improvements in many ways like science." F74 highlights the exchange within which "US advanced technology can bring a lot to Europe and European history is culturally rich (for US to benefit)." F73 points out that "while globalization suppresses cultural differences,

exchanges will benefit science". The concept of science and technology appeared to be a major component in the exchange process of globalization.

In addition to the various forms of exchanges taking place, the concept of an evolution of new and unique products and ideas arose. Both French and American participants touched on these ideas of hybridization. A204 asserted that "when people from different cultures come together and learn about each other's culture, diversity is created." Such diversity was seen as beneficial to the world if it focuses on the positive qualities of the cultures involved. "I am for globalization if it is for a mix, taking the good from each culture" reported participant F65. Amongst several of the participants, the process of globalization appeared to result in the creation of new, beneficial products and concepts. A116 explains that globalization is the "process in which many factors, for example currency, integrate into one, resulting in a utility for the world." F24 adds that globalization "makes unique forms of music and fashion around the world." From the creation of multi-cultural music to the unifying of currencies, several participants from both groups valued

the exchange and subsequent hybridization that globalization appeared to initiate.

Somewhere between the flow, or lack thereof, of ideas, cultures, and economics, globalization is at the heart of an evolving world. A key to the direction of this evolution might be found in concepts such as communication and international relations, the next major category.

### Communication

The next types of categories that evolved from the data revolved around the concepts of communication, international relations, and world aspirations. Although similar to the previously mentioned concept of cultural exchange, this category appears to differ by way of placing a higher aim on the role of globalization. A consortium of responses included the idea that through globalization the world will become more unified and interdependent. While French and American participants over-lapped in the general idea of international relations and communication, specifics as to how relations and communication occur differed.

In terms of communication, both groups highlighted the important role communication plays in globalization. Interestingly, French responses appeared to associate

communication with the freedom to travel and the opening of national borders. F14 described the world and globalization as "small villages, erased borders, and the discovery of new cultures. I can travel easily everywhere, cheap tickets, and meet people of different cultures in France as well." F58 added that through globalization there is "the freedom for people and money to move around the world in all facets." Traveling and opening borders were central to French participants' concept of communication.

American responses, on the other hand, found communication to be more closely linked to the roles media and technology, such as the Internet, play in and throughout society. A117 explained that "the internet has accelerated the globalization bringing remote areas of the world in touch with the modern world." A few American participants even highlighted the unifying and opening of communication barriers through the spread of the English language. A125 elaborated that "globalization is the idea of connecting the world universally, like having a common language such as English." A158 agreed, "globalization is the growing inter-connectedness of the world by means of mass communication and...the spread of English." All in

all, both groups of respondents appeared to maintain positive outlooks on the role globalization can play in improving world communication and dialogue.

### International Relations

Between French and American participant responses there appeared to be a slight difference in terms of the level and depth of international relations. The American responses focused mainly on idealistic tones of "uniting", "connecting", or "maintaining relationships between countries." A186 stated that "globalization is the world working together" and A181 found that we are "becoming one as a world and working together."

While French responses included these common peaceful ideals, they also mentioned concepts such as maintaining the same civic duties, standardizing the law, equality, and world citizenship under one cause. F1 asserted that "each country in the world has the chance to have the same laws, the same rights, and the same civic duties." F61 explained globalization and its international relations as "a rise in the exchange of standard law concerning commerce, construction, transport, and work."

Although both groups' responses are somewhat vague in content, each group appeared to expand beyond the common

goal of international relations into spheres that might reflect the local sentiment. The French appear to associate certain humanitarian characteristics with international relations, whereas American responses likened relations to maintaining peace. In both situations the local mood might affect these ideas. Events such as the war in Iraq and the expansion of the European border directly reflect the sentiment expressed by many of the French and American participants.

#### Economics and Politics

The last major category that was found within the French and American responses involved concern about economics, power struggles, and politics. The concept of economic values seemed to be broadly described by both groups as the "reorganization of society around economic thinking." Both groups associated ideas such as the increasing power of corporate companies, monopolies, ultraliberal economic thinking, with the phenomenon of globalization. Interestingly, it appears that French and American respondents interpreted these concepts and their ramifications in different ways.

While some French responses recognized the benefits of a larger economic market, they tended to highlight the



local ramifications that extend from globalization. Profit over law, profit over people, and the end of small business are common responses that reveal certain French participants' thinking. F48 points out, "there is a lack of humanity because it is based on the economy, based on money, and profit without concern for the poor." Likewise, F84 highlights that "globalization leads to the disappearance of local markets from international competition. No more mom and pop stores." Economically, to several French people globalization is to the detriment of the local markets and local decision-making.

For several French participants, the spread of globalization equated to a shift towards larger economies and a move away from local autonomy. F56 pointed out that "economic and cultural standardization is imposed by big power bureaucracy." More specifically, F29 explained "when a government decides on something, it must ask the opinion of the multinational bosses and also of the World Bank." Power, as it appears for many of these French participants, is maintained by entities beyond the local environment.

The American responses appear to associate economic values more with dollars and cents. Many American responses stated that through globalization, more products

and labor are cheaper. A136 explains that "globalization lowers costs, I will get a better price but American jobs will be lost to foreign competitors." This apparently comes at a price as A131 explains, "as an American, the cost of goods is lowered, but jobs are often lost to overseas outsourcing." A180 found that "globalization affects me more in the long run, as forests are chopped down, the air is polluted, and cultures are homogenized." Others revealed that due to corporate-oriented values, unemployment, outsourcing, and pollution are on the rise.

In addition, both participant groups appear to agree that the economic tendencies associated with globalization lead to the exploitation of poor countries.

As the participants from both France and the United States pointed out, globalization can be defined by a variety of terms set in a variety of contexts. But the effects of globalization appear to be dependent on whether one is at the receiving or sending end of culture, products, and ideas. In this regard, it is nearly impossible to separate the benefits and fallbacks linked to globalization. As A158 suggests,

"Globalization is a two-sided process, both the growing of inter-connectedness between the nations of the world by means of mass communication and the outsourcing, corporate-led spread of capitalism, low-paying jobs and of English."

The general consensus amongst several participants in both respondent groups appeared to believe that globalization is the increasing interdependency that is spreading around the world.

## Values

### Individual Values

The following data reflects the combined effort of statistical analysis and qualitative analysis. Participants were asked to rate their own personal values and the values of their Nationality and of the opposing Nationality (French or American). Values were measured using both the 5-point Likert-type scale and open-ended responses.

The Likert-type responses allow for both participant groups to select the level of importance of 11 basic values. The American participants tended to place a

stronger emphasis on values such as family  $t(199) = 2.72$ ,  $p = .007$ , individuality  $t(197) = 4.76$ ,  $p = .001$ , and religion  $t(199) = 1.99$ ,  $p = .048$  than their French participant counterparts. Meanwhile, French participants seemed to place higher importance on values such as hobbies  $t(198) = -5.82$ ,  $p = .001$  and cultural diversity  $t(199) = -2.06$ ,  $p = .041$  than the American participants.

### National Values

When given the chance to identify the values of their own nationality and of the other participant group's nationality, participants were endlessly creative in their description of values. A list of 283 values was created by the French and American participants. The 5 most important values were compiled and added up amongst the two participant groups. Within the French and American participant groups, the highest concentration of national values found were as follows:

	<u>French National Values</u>	<u>American National Values</u>
1)	Culture	Money
2)	Family	Family
3)	Heritage	Work
4)	Freedom	Education
5)	Gastronomy	Freedom

Some values such as freedom and family appeared to be present in the national characteristic for both participant groups. But other values such as culture and money were extremely important in one participant group's national character while not appearing in the other.

The following section asked for one participant group to make assumptions about the other participant group's national value system. The highest concentration of perceived national values for the other nationality were as follows. Column (F) represents French participant opinions about American values. Column (A) represents American participant opinions about French values.

(F) <u>French → American Values</u>	(A) <u>American → French Values</u>
1) Religion	Family
2) Money	Money
3) Patriotism	Education
4) Power/Individuality	Culture
5) Freedom of expression	Religion

Both participant groups appeared to match or predict two values for the other nationality. French participants correctly associated values of money and freedom with the American participant group. Meanwhile, the Americans

accurately linked values of culture and family to the French participant group. Obviously, the process of defining a national character is difficult, if not impossible. So these values merely serve as a basis for comparison.

In both assessments of values it appears that both participant groups defined themselves through different values. French participants appeared to place higher levels of importance on the variables concerning the cultural aspects of society. On the personal plane, hobbies and cultural diversity were more highly regarded while on a national level culture, heritage, and gastronomy were emphasized. In regards to the American participant group, personal values like family, religion, and individuality appeared to be quite important. Meanwhile, on a national level, this American participant group suggested that money, family, work, education, and freedom are variables that are quite partial to the American spirit.

While both participant groups revealed similar and opposing qualities that constitute personal and National character, the largest disparity occurred between the interpretation or assumption about the other nationalities'

character. Linking money with the French and patriotism with the Americans are areas that might ground tension. Recognizing that it is extremely difficult to measure National or individual character by any means, these results merely hint at certain areas that could be useful in assessing a relationship between these two countries.

### Cultural Products

The second section investigated the perceived positive/negative impact of cultural products on the French and American landscape. Of the four cultural product variables (Coke, McDonalds, Disney, and TV/Film), no significant differences appeared to occur within or between either the French or American participant groups. Both participant groups appeared to be ambiguous about the effects of American cultural products. Several participants from both groups appeared to agree that certain products lead to the spread of globalization. Products that were mentioned between both participant groups included food, fast-food, Coca-Cola, Disney, Nike, Levis, and gas. In most instances it was difficult to determine whether these products carried negative connotations of globalization.

The major subject that differed between these two participant groups involved the issue of politics; with American politics in particular. The French participant group differed greatly with the American participants' opinions on the effects of American politics on France and the world. The t test revealed a significant difference concerning the variable of politics,  $t(196) = 6.10, p = .001$ . On average French participants displayed more negative effects associated with American politics ( $M = 4.02, SD = 1.18$ ) than the American participant group ( $M = 2.93, SD = 1.33$ ). This highlights that politics might play a more significant role in globalization than cultural products.

### Coca-Cola

When asked what Coca-Cola symbolizes to both American and French participants, numerous categories were created. The three prominent categories emerging from the data were Coca-Cola as a beverage, emotion, and business.

#### French Coca-Cola

A large group of participants labeled Coca-Cola as a drink. Other descriptors included a refreshing, sugary, reliable, coca-based, highly consumed drink. Only a few likened it to an American drink and even fewer focused on



its potential health risks. Other descriptors included sugar, medicine (historical connotation), reliable and good taste, and coca-based. A few responses also highlighted Coke's global reach.

As an emotion, Coke appeared to be constantly linked to American culture. For some participants it conjures up an old America as F45 described, "sugar, tasty, good advertising, and an America from the 40s." F66 likened Coke to "the American dream, freedom, open-mindedness, and the joys of life." F48 added that "since the 1950s it has been a symbol of the American dream, a symbol of the U.S.A. economy." It appears that the nostalgia of Coca-Cola symbol has been present for quite some time. Others link it to "childhood" as F3 remembered. Even within the rich heritage of France, F50 finds Coke as "a unique product because of its composition, which has certain tradition even in France."

Other participants had a slightly less positive view of Coke. F52 asserted, "Coke is the invasion of American culture." F16 believed that "Coke is America imposing its image of tradition (Santa Claus) throughout the planet." F17 alleged that "Coke is imperialism, colonialism, and a bad side of the U.S.A." Specifically affecting French

culture, F12 states that Coke is "a drink that changes our values toward economic profit as opposed to the individual."

Many participants found Coke to be a world business and a world product. F28 defined Coke as "a beverage known all around the world." F40 found Coke to be "a large multinational that dominates the sale of gaseous beverages." As a business, most of the French participants tended to link America to Coca-Cola. F93 suggested that Coke is "American power influencing international trade." Emphasizing the American empire's effect over local products, F13 asserted that "American society commercializes its label and doesn't permit local competition." F9 highlighted that "Coke is associated with other large American companies that take over the world."

Other descriptors included international trade, universal brand, marketing, and dependency on the world. F64 explained such reliance as "a mega business that sells its product even in countries that can't afford it, convincing them that it is a necessary product." A few responses suggested that Coke has moved beyond the American sphere and now is a truly global product. F61 explained

that "Coke is the best idea for a drink, it is beyond America, it is the entire world."

Within the French participant pool, Coca-Cola had numerous descriptors. The most common association was as a simple drink. Next, many people linked it to American culture, for better or for worse. Lastly, Coca-Cola was recognized for its international business and branding ability, most often linked to America.

#### American Coca-Cola

Within the American participant pool, the same three categories (beverage, emotion, and business) emerged. Many of the respondents found Coke to be a simple drink. Common descriptions revolved around Coke as beverage in several different contexts. While some associated Coke with refreshing and consistent taste, others highlighted caffeine, sugar, and junk food. To A161, Coke represented "sugar, obesity, and a bad habit." A large concentration of responses in the beverage category found it was an unhealthy product. Others pointed out its popularity around the world. As A155 points out, "it's the all-American dream, something everyone drinks, a world-wide known product".

Coke as a feeling or emotional attachment revolved around the concept of American culture. A large portion of these responses believed that Coke is a representation of American culture. Although respondents didn't directly comment or define American culture they made associations such as "Coke is America, like hot dogs and apple pie", as noticed by A109. Along the lines of American culture, several respondents believed Coke to be linked to the American dream. Other feelings included a sense of community, youth, freedom, happiness, and fun. A108 recalled Coke as "something I enjoyed in my childhood and is used as a treat on occasion." For its global message, A117 suggested that Coke is "an American symbol of what or how we are viewed globally, the good life."

The last category emerged around the concept of Coke as a business. Participants described Coke by various economic terms of both positive and negative connotations. These descriptors included corporate, capitalistic, mass production, marketing, monopoly, imperialistic, and exploitation. A111 attributed Coca-Cola's world success from being "the world's most recognized company." A138 and A123 took a negative tone both agreeing that Coke is "social irresponsibility, greedy, and powerful." A151

suggested that it is "globalization at its finest, brand loyalty and widespread recognition, monopoly of its market." The most dominant sub-category included world product.

For the majority of both American and French participants, Coca-Cola appeared to be associated with the same categories: a beverage, an emotion, and a business. Reverenced as a simple drink, a large number cited associated health risks. In the context of an emotion, both nostalgia and the American Dream were continually brought up. And as a business, Coca-Cola was recognized for its stealthy international business practices. Few examples likened its business aspects to America, instead international market references were used.

### Mecca-Cola

Created as a politically and socially conscious alternative to Coca-Cola, a Mecca-Cola advertisement was presented to both American and French participants.

#### Mecca-Cola for Americans

Throughout the process of categorizing the various opinions about Mecca-Cola, numerous explanations and opinions arose. While these different rationalizations

both for and against purchasing Mecca-Cola were present, certain categories appeared more often than others. When offered the chance to purchase Mecca-Cola, an alternative to Coca-Cola, many American participants appeared to be interested and willing to try the new beverage. Most positive (yes) responses showed interest in Mecca's focus on helping people.

A115 asserted that, "I would buy this product based on its social responsiveness and depending on the taste."

A191 expanded Mecca's advertising theme in that

"I would want to encourage such a trend, if properly promoted, practices like this could become mainstream. All major corporations owe humanity so very much."

Some on the other hand, concentrated more on the specific causes and groups it supported. A121 highlighted interest in Mecca-Cola because "it donates proceeds to

Palestinians." A141 goes even further to say, "the donations to Palestinian organizations is very significant and against most American ideals. Its important to me."

In these rare situations, it appears that some are interested in Mecca-Cola not for what it is, but for what it isn't (pro-American).

For some of the participants surveyed, they appreciated the challenge that Mecca-Cola represented in the face of Coca-Cola. A149 explains it best that "it undermines Coca-Cola and is not a mega-poly. It does not represent the vulgarity of the American culture which globalization is spreading." A149 later explains, "while Mecca-Cola is socially responsible, Coca-Cola wants to dominate world markets with no consideration to the cultural values of a country." A197 explains it more specifically as "Mecca seems to be culturally aware, and they actually seem to care about people rather than to deduce them to a statistic or number." While these responses are few and far between, they draw attention to common arguments used against American companies, such as Coca-Cola.

On the opposite end, American responses that were not interested in Mecca-Cola appeared to arise from uncertainty in its causes and its lack of local sponsorship. In all, the negative responses to Mecca-Cola revolved around various reasoning. Some examples included disinterest in non-American causes, clashing political and religious beliefs, and uncertainty about the product's foreign causes.

Several participants did not show interest in helping causes outside of the U.S.A. A135 asserted that "I would buy the product only if donations were true and there was a portion to help people in America. We need to take care of home first." A104 added that "I like buying products that would help my community."

Mecca-Cola's advertised link to Palestine also served as a major turn-off in the eyes of several participants. Using political motifs in the advertising campaign caused A142 to ask, "why would I want to support a nation who persecutes, such as killing and suicide bombs, other 'sacred' nations for their own so called personal beliefs?" A199 personalizes buying Mecca by saying, "I don't want to get involved with Middle East politics and I am not for Palestine." Some American participants found a link between being pro-Palestinian and purchasing Mecca-Cola.

Mecca-Cola for French

Even with its French origins, Mecca-Cola apparently did not fair well with these French participants. The majority of responses chose against purchasing the product, with a few others expressing a slight possibility. Although the reasoning behind not choosing to purchase Mecca was diverse, most responses were focused on the



political messages, Palestinian propaganda, and anti-Coke/America connotations.

In terms of political messages, F25 declined to purchase it because "Mecca is too politically engaged." F23 added her disgust for political messages, "I hate political messages. When you're thirsty you drink, but in this case I wouldn't drink." Gradually, many responses recognized that the Mecca-Cola message was directed at or against America. F45 expressed disinterest "because it pushes a message of violence and anti-America. Hypocritical since 10% goes to Palestinian organizations."

A few respondents acknowledged Mecca-Cola's attempt at copying the Coca-Cola logo. F52 opted not to purchase Mecca because it was "too close to the Coke logo." F72 added that it was a "Coke imitation, inferior taste, financially benefits terrorists." F68 even mentioned the separation between products and personal beliefs and causes, explaining that "Its a copy of Coke. I boycott it sometimes but not over political ideologies." So while many of the participants might have disagreed or disliked Coke, there appeared to be a trend in the general distaste for combining political messages with commerce.

For those that appeared to be inclined to purchase Mecca-Cola, their reasoning went along the lines of helping people and being Pro-Palestinian. F95 appreciated the fact that it "fights for a cause." F86 and F91 expressed interest because they were "pro-Palestinian." F60 agreed because "a percentage is distributed to Palestinian children and other organizations."

Few participants appeared to be interested in purchasing Mecca-Cola because of its anti-globalization rhetoric. Two respondents did however mention their inclination towards Mecca for its message. F61 stated that "I will drink the product more for the joke than for the humanitarian benefit, even if it guarded all the money. I would buy it because it symbolizes revolution against oppression." Interestingly, F61 later added that "I don't associate Coke with my disagreements towards the U.S.A." and "Everyone loves (Coke), just a drink, not political." Similarly, F64 found that Mecca-Cola possessed "morale engagement or the condemnation of another countries politics through consumption." F64 did define Coke as "a mega business that sells its product even in countries that can't afford...convinced them that it is a necessary product." Both examples suggested that interest in trying

Mecca-Cola was not necessarily associated with a backlash to Coca-Cola, but more based on personal beliefs and preferences.

### Corporate Responsibility

The concept of corporate responsibility was measured and compared between French and American participants. The t test was used to test the effects of corporate responsibility and corporate reputation on consumer decision-making, revealing a significant difference between the French and American participant groups. Both variables of corporate social responsibility ( $t(195) = -2.486$ ,  $p = .014$ ) and the reputation of a company ( $t(195) = -3.141$ ,  $p = .002$ ) appeared significantly more favorable with French participants than American participants. This data possibly suggests that these French respondents place a higher role and responsibility as to the function of companies within a society.

### Findings as Evidence for Hypothesis

The hypotheses were originally founded on multi-disciplinary readings and personal observations made during extensive world travels. The results from the data

occasionally varied from what the researcher had originally anticipated, thus highlighting aspects previously unconsidered.

HF1: Popular culture items will be perceived as having negative effects on French culture.

HA5: Popular culture items will be perceived as having positive effects on American culture.

In regards to popular culture items, there appeared to be no consistent values associating positive or negative effects with the listed cultural product variables for either American or French participant groups. However, there was data highlighting a high level of meaning and worth related to local cultural products and heritage amongst the French participant group. The hypotheses appears to be incorrect in asserting that the French participants will perceive foreign cultural products as having negative consequences on their own culture. Instead, the data did reveal that the concern is shifted away from the threat of foreign products and more towards the protection of local ones.

In addition, the emphasis and concern for cultural products in a global sense appears to be more focused on the company than the product itself. Concern for corporate social responsibility and company reputation amongst the French participants highlights the potential safeguarding role they associate with companies.

HF2: French will be more inclined to perceive anti-globalization products (Mecca Coke) as beneficial to the world.

HA4: Americans will perceive anti-globalization products (Mecca Coke) as harmful and deceiving to the world.

Contrary to the researcher's projected hypothesis, the politically active Coca-Cola substitute, Mecca-Cola, appeared more accepted by American participants than by the French. Many American participants were intrigued and interested in Mecca's open involvement with aid organizations. Whether this translates into actual sales is another story. The French participants, on the other hand, found Mecca's political ideologies to contradict their own personal opinions.

HA3: Americans will perceive European cultures to have the same values as America.

Although results from both national groups showed that their assessment of one another's group esteem was fairly accurate, there were however some fundamental values that were misinterpreted. For example, the value of money, American participant group's apparent primary value (n=43), was mentioned neither as a French participant's personal value nor as a French participant's national value. Similarly, the issue of patriotism was not mentioned by a significant amount of American participants (n=5), even though the French participants associated it with Americans (n=18).

A common model for assessing different value systems amongst cultures comes from Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions (Hofstede, 2004). Hofstede presents categorical dimensions on a continuum: Power distance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, certain-uncertainty avoidance, and long-term to short-term orientation.

Power distance investigates how hierarchical differences are reflected within society, such as the varying levels of inequality and respect. Individualism-

collectivism highlights the degree to which people maintain weak or strong group associations. Masculinity-femininity explains whether a society maintains more strict gender roles (masculine) or more overlapping gender roles (feminine). Certain-uncertainty avoidance determines the degree to which members of a cultural group veer away from uncertain situations. Long-term to short-term orientation reflects the emphasis placed on traditional and older values. Combined these five continuums are used to measure differing value orientations within and between cultures.

Comparing France and the United States, Hofstede found that Americans maintain comparatively higher levels of individuality (94%) and masculinity (61%), while the French revealed high levels of power distance (68%) and uncertainty avoidance (86%). In a larger context, the United States ranked the highest in levels of individuality amongst the 50 participating countries. Meanwhile, France along with Belgium and Portugal scored relatively higher in uncertainty avoidance than most of their European neighbors.

Comparing Hofstede's discoveries with this research highlights certain commonalities that were present in both research projects concerning French and American

participant groups. This research found the American participants to possess a higher incidence of individuality ( $t(197) = 4.76, p = .01$ ), consistent with Hofstede's 94% rating for Americans and 43% rating for French. Individuality appears to be a major factor affecting the American participants' lifestyle. Qualitatively, this research also found several strong correlations with Hofstede's cultural dimensions regarding uncertainty avoidance. The French participants appeared to value concepts such as culture ( $n=27$ ), heritage ( $n=24$ ), and gastronomy ( $n=18$ ) on a high level. Such qualities appear to correspond to France's high levels of uncertainty avoidance (86%). This helps to explain many of the French participants' distrust for different and new products, such as Mecca-Cola.

So while interpretations about each other's culture reveal some opposing values and misinterpretations, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions helped explain how such differences might occur through concepts like individuality and uncertainty avoidance.



## Summary

### Globalization

The opinions of both participant groups were diverse and extensive. In terms of globalization, French and American participant perceptions' covered all potential social, economical, and political aspects. The main categories appeared to be issues of standardization, hybridization/exchange, communication, international relations, economics and politics.

In regards to standardization, both participant groups recognized a potential homogenization of culture and goods. Specifically, French participants found such uniformization to possibly lead to a threat of their own cultural identity. Participants linking hybridization/exchange to globalization found the exchange of goods, ideas, and people to be in full and unrestricted force. Many American participants found this movement to exist in the context of moving products and evolving economies. The French participants on the other hand associated much of the exchange with technology, knowledge, and science. One main offshoot of all this exchange results in increased communication.

Both participant groups recognized that there was a flow of ideas and dialogue between previously limited geographic locations and people. The French participants attributed the opening of communication to the increased feasibility in travel and the opening of national borders. American participants found increased communication to exist through advancing technologies, such as mass media and the Internet.

International relations highlighted the degree of involvement both participant groups appeared to associate with an expanding and increasingly interconnected world. American participant responses expressed idealistic tones of unity and the maintaining of good relationships between countries. French participants agreed, but in addition stressed the need for inclusion and maintenance of universal humanitarian laws and rights.

Economics and the increased exchange of goods were values present within both participant groups. But numerous American participants appeared to associate the economy in a globalized world with the increased flow of cheaper goods, outsourcing of jobs, and rising pollution levels. The French participants tended to personalize the global economy more in terms of the loss of local products

and local autonomy in a growing international, bureaucratic market.

Both participant groups, however, had numerous oppositions to the economics of globalization due to its apparent exploitation of the poor.

### Values

In terms of values, there were differences and similarities found between the French and American respondent groups. The French participants reported higher levels of cultural diversity and hobbies, while the American participants stressed family, individuality, and religion. On a National level, the French participants emphasized culture, family, heritage, gastronomy, and freedom. Meanwhile, the American respondents valued money, family, work, education, and freedom. Values such as family and freedom appeared to be central themes within both participant groups, while concepts of money and culture appeared to hint at differing interests.

Interpreting what the other participant group might find important, the French respondents believed Americans to value religion, money, patriotism, individuality, and freedom of expression. Inversely, the American participants found the French to value family, money,

education, culture, and religion. The main discrepancy, in guessing the other groups' values, was the concept that French participants appeared to express little interest in money or issues of money. Meanwhile, the American participants didn't appear to express any levels of patriotism.

### Cultural Products

Cultural products did not appear to have consistent negative or positive effects on either National group. The difference that did register as significant involved politics. While, cultural products of the United States did not appear to affect the French participants cultural landscape, American politics did.

### Coca-Cola

While Coke has a universal appeal and disgust alike, certain cultural features differentiated Coca-Cola between the French and the American participants. As a drink, the American participants found health concerns to be a major issue with Coca-Cola. As a feeling, both groups had similar sentiment except for a little added resentment from the French participants. A few French respondents found the spread of Coca-Cola within France and abroad to be detrimental to the local culture and value system(s). As a

business, American participants appeared to perceive Coca-Cola as an international company. Inversely, several French participants found Coca-Cola to be directly linked to America and American business practices. Overall, it seemed that while Coca-Cola has become a common and accepted product in France, French participants associated it with America, and possibly American policy.

#### Mecca-Cola

Mecca-Cola is a beverage product marketed as an alternative to multinational corporations. Even with its conception in France, the French participants did not appear overly enthralled by Mecca-Cola's intentions. Most participants chose against purchasing the product citing both uncertainty and disapproval of its causes. On a whole, it appeared that the French participants did not agree with the idea of mixing commerce with social or political causes, especially Palestinian ones.

For the few that were interested in purchasing a Mecca-Cola, either its humanitarian efforts or its Palestinian focus were noted. No participant cited their purchase of Mecca-Cola as a means of boycotting Coca-Cola. Participants mentioned disapproval of the endeavors and

actions of multinational firms, but no one cited specific names, such as Coca-Cola.

As for the American participant group, even with its borrowed logo and anti-American connotations, there appeared to be an interest in trying Mecca-Cola.

This politically and socially active marketing ploy appeared to be directly aimed at those either against companies like Coca-Cola, or for Palestinian causes. It appeared that French participants were against the amalgamation of commercial products and distant social causes. While, a few respondents were interested in the product for its humanitarian efforts, those were often associated with being Pro-Palestinian. Quite possibly, while France is at the forefront of the anti-globalization movement, companies like Coca-Cola do not epitomize the aspects of globalization they disapprove. Instead the French participants appear to be more cognizant of the political associations made with commercial products.

#### Corporate Responsibility

There was a significant difference between the French and American respondents concerning "corporate responsibility" and "corporate reputation". The French participants scored higher on both variables possibly

suggesting that business in France has a higher role in society than in the United States.

#### Interpretation

The results from both qualitative and quantitative sides of the research appear to reveal both opposing and similar qualities between these two French and American participant groups. On the individual level, personal values of money and culture appeared to be key descriptors in defining and separating both participant groups. While American participants suggested that money is in the center of American life, French participants highlighted the role of culture in theirs. Such values might help explain the role globalization plays within each society. From the French perspective, the anti-American pretense is actually the drive to preserve French culture in disguise. Local French culture and autonomy appears to be threatened and efforts to stabilize its presence and control take form however they can.

In regards to international relations and communication in the world of globalization, both participant groups appeared to expand beyond the common goal of international relations into spheres that might

reflect the local sentiment. The French participants appeared to associate certain humanitarian characteristics with international relations, whereas American participant responses likened relations to maintaining peace. In both situations the local mood might affect these ideas. For example, in France the extension of European Union borders possibly signifies the need for more common rules and standards to successfully co-exist. On the American side, the current mood might encapsulate the war in Iraq and military efforts in Afghanistan. In both situations, the main goal or concept associated with globalization is maintaining peace.

In regards to cultural products, both cultural groups provided examples of products that they believed leads to the spread of globalization. The list provided several name brands that over-lapped between the French and American participant groups. But what was actually more revealing, was the products mentioned by French participants. Products such as Nestle, Dannon, French wine, Japanese goods, Vivendi, and Adidas come from Switzerland, France, Japan, Italy, and Germany. The international make-up of this group of products might



suggest that the spread of globalization occurs from numerous international sources.

Quite possibly, for these French participants the origin or destination of the product is not as important as the responsibility and reputation of the company. In addition, they appeared to have a firm disliking for commercial products that possessed political ideologies. This might reveal that the concern is more focused on the companies' role and responsibility within society than the actual cultural product itself.

French participants found both positive and negative aspects of Coca-Cola, from its nostalgia to its world market dominance. Surprisingly, when given a supposedly more humanitarian alternative, they were not interested. Quite possibly, this French participant group, while sometimes skeptical of Coca-Cola's endeavors, was not interested in replacing it with another set of ideologies. From the capitalistic values of Coca-Cola to the political activities of Mecca-Cola, the participants appeared to find little difference between the two companies.

Mecca-Cola did not appear to be welcome within the French participant group. Despite, Mecca-Cola's obvious replication of the Coke label, few participants mentioned

it. Instead issues of political affiliation turned off potential consumers. This could possibly suggest that Coca-Cola is a company well beyond Mecca's attempt at challenging its global image. Coca-Cola might be so well ingrained in the minds and hearts of so many people that it truly has become a local product within France, no matter what it might symbolize internationally. Meanwhile, Mecca is simply trying to replace one ideology with another.

CHAPTER FOUR  
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Brief Summary

The concept of globalization highlights the diverse features of culture, economics, politics, and society in an increasingly symbiotic world. Issues of standardization appeared to be crucial in the loss or shift of France's local culture. Inversely, American participants associated the movement of goods and the opening of economies with exchange. French participants tended to focus more on the exchange occurring through science, knowledge, and technology. International relations appeared to be key concepts of globalization as American participants stressed the need for peace and understanding, while French participants stressed more universal rights and regulations. Communicating amongst the world for American respondents appeared to occur through mediums of new technologies and the English language. French participants associated communication in a globalization context more to increased feasibility in traveling and the opening of borders. Economically, globalization involved the increase in goods exchanged. But from the American participant

perspective this can come at a cost of outsourced jobs and increased pollution levels. French perspectives found the local culture and goods to decline in the face of globalization.

These opinions were moderately revealed through the participants' value systems. French participants emphasized more cultural diversity and hobbies on a personal level, and culture, family, heritage, gastronomy, and equality on a national level. American participants stressed family, individuality, and religion on a personal level, while money, family, work, education, and freedom highlighted the national character. While some values overlapped within both cultural groups, others diverged. The American emphasis for money might not necessarily mesh with the French priorities for culture. Similarly, issues of patriotism and cultural heritage appeared to be sensitive concepts within each participant group. Where cultural heritage is not for sale, patriotism should not be judged through the media or over-aggressive politicians. Instead greater sensitivity should be implemented around these concepts in future international dialogue.

## Conclusion

In an era of international indifference and unilateral decision-making, much can be learned from the associations between perceptions of globalization, values, cultural products, and consumer choices. The pertinent issues of globalization, (including standardization, exchange/hybridization, international relations, communication, and economics/politics) were present between these American and French participant groups. But within each of these societies, national and personal values allow for various forms of interpretation. Pride in cultural heritage will naturally reveal distrust for new, international products for the French. Similarly, emphases on family, money, and work will provide hesitation and disapproval over expanding markets and outsourced jobs within the American population.

These feelings and values will occasionally translate into specific consumer choices. For some of the French participants Coca-Cola was a threat to local culture, while for some of the Americans it was threat to personal health. When offered the Mecca-Cola alternative, it did not reflect that market's values. Distrust for political ideologies, was as strong if not stronger than distrust for financially

oriented ones. As Mecca-Cola exemplified, a shift in ideology, is still an ideology. So, it appeared that amongst the French and American participant groups, interpretation and utilization of cultural products is still at the hands of local values. As highlighted by the French respondent group, the cultural product was not as influential to the local culture as the political message and social responsibility, or lack there of, of the company. Globalization not only involves the influence of international products, but also the values of companies that distribute them. Yet while products from all over the world appear to transcend national borders with political or economical gusto, their interpretation and utilization is still at the hands of local values.

#### Limitations

Due to the wide scope of this research, the responses highlight a variety of different topics and concepts. Each participant's response provides insight into the numerous areas of perceptions of globalization, values, and consumer choice. Collectively, the associations and correlations between these independent results are merely suggestions about the concepts and complexity surrounding

globalization. These research findings do not provide comparison among the variables in this project. Direct relationships between issues like globalization and values were limited. This led to several independent data sets that were weakly related to each other. Readers should value the data as an exploratory look at issues pertaining to globalization, while realizing that these discoveries are limited in their representation and depth.

Comparing two separate cultural groups is quite a difficult task. As evidenced in the process of conducting this research, finding representative participants from the United States and France, from rural to urban areas, requires extensive travel and time. While the research attempted to reach as many diverse and representative participants as possible, a convenient sample was used, thus limiting the nature of the findings. Similarly, with only 202 respondents participating in this research, all responses have a partial representation. Nevertheless, the data sought to highlight possible aspects of globalization useful for future research.

## Future Research

This research focused on similarities and differences in values and interpretations of globalization between two nationalities. Future research might want to concentrate on how local and international goods and services transform within different societies. For example, using a longitudinal approach, an investigation could be done on the different ways societies employ the same cultural products and how the role of certain activities might be shifting within a society. For instance, researching the function and significance of watching movies and eating fast food would serve as key activities to research. In addition, assessing quantifiable data such as shifts in weight change, working hours, and family time could reveal possible changes in the local lifestyle.



APPENDIX A  
VALUES (ALPHABETIZED)

Accountability - Ambassador - American dream - Amusement  
Anti-Jewish - Anti-society - Appearances - Arrogance

Beauty - Being #1 - Being our allies - Blindness - Bread  
Brotherhood - Business

Capitalism - Career - Caring for others - Cars - Catching  
terrorists - Centralization - Champagne - Chauvinism  
Cheap things - Cheese - Children - Christianity  
Cigarettes - Citizenship- Citizen (good) - Communication  
Community - Competition - Confidence - Consumption  
Conquest - Corporate fascism - Country - Courage - Culture  
Cultural Products - Cultural Diversity

Democracy - Destruction - Dollar - Domination

Economy - Education - Efficiency - Ego - Elegance  
Entertainment - Environment - Environmental protection  
Equality - Ethnicity - Ethnic diversity - Euro

Faith - Family - Fame - Family - Family flag - Fashion  
Financial stability - Food - Fraternity - Freedom - Freedom  
of expression - Freedom of religion - Freedom Fries  
French culture - French Fries - Friends - Fun

Gastronomy - Generosity - God - Government - Global Stature  
Global awareness - Globalization - Greed  
Group superiority

Happiness - Hate Americans - Health - Health care - Helping  
others - Heritage- History - Hobbies - Honor - Honesty  
Hope - Hot dog - Hotels - Hypocrisy

Imperialism - Independence - Individuality - Intolerance  
Intellectualism - Integrity

Job security - Joys of life - Justice

Kiss - Knowledge

Leaders - Leisure - Liberty - Life's pleasures - Liberalism  
Liberty - Life - Lifestyle - Local products - Love  
Love Arabs - Loyalty

Materialism - Medical progress - Military - Modernization  
Monuments - Money - Money profits - Morality

Narrow-minded - Nationalism

Opening the world - Opportunities  
Patriotism - Peace - People - Personal comfort/luxury  
Personal liberties - Personal goals - Philosophy - Politics  
Politeness - Position - Possessions - Poverty - Power  
Pluralism - the President - Pride - Pro-Arab - Profits  
Progress - Property

Quality - Quality of life

Rapidity - Republicans - Religion - Reputation - Respect  
Responsibility - Righteousness - Right to health  
Right to strike - Resistance - Racism - Rock n' roll

Safety - Sanctions - Secularism - Security  
Security (economic) - Self - Selfish - Self-made  
Self-sufficiency - Service - Sex - Sexual equality  
Show business - Solidarity - Social equality - Socialism  
Sports Standardization - Status - Stereotypes - Strength  
Style - Success - Superficiality - the System

Technology - Terrorism (helping) - Trade - Tradition  
Tolerance - Top country - Tourism

Union - Unity - Universal rights - Upward mobility

Vacation- Violence - Voting

War - Wealth - Well-being - Weapons - Welfare - Wine  
Women (hairy) - Work - Work (working hard) - World police

Youth

APPENDIX B

CULTURAL PRODUCTS SPREADING GLOBALIZATION

French

**Food**

**Fast-food**

Planet Hollywood

Nestle

French wine

**Coca-Cola**

Pepsi

Dannon

**Clothes**

Chocolate

Phillipe Morris

Marlboro

Adidas

**Nike**

**Levis**

Japanese goods

US goods

Health conscious goods

Cinema

Vivendi

Universal

Music

**Disney**

Books

TV

**Gas**

Internet

Microsoft

Information

Karaoke

American

**Food**

**Fast-food**

Starbucks

Burger King

Sprite

**Coca-Cola**

Pizza Hut

Beef

**Clothes**

Gap

Disposable papers

Visa

Mastercard

**Nike**

**Levis**

Gucci

Sears

Inefficient cars

American film

Blockbuster

Electronics

Verizon

**Disney**

Cell phone

Walmart

**Gas**

Internet

GM

APPENDIX C

FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES -  
A COMPARATIVE SURVEY ENGLISH VERSION

## France and the United States – A Comparative Survey

The following survey is a research project for a graduate student in the United States. The goals of the survey are to discover if U.S. values are similar to French values. For the remainder of the survey, United States will be referred to as America. The survey requests your complete and honest opinion. There are no right or wrong answers. The following three sections should take about 15 minutes to fill out. All responses will remain completely anonymous and maintain no connections with any private (for profit) institution. If you wish to have more information in regards to the research project and/or the cumulative responses, please email the project coordinator at [alexshey@hotmail.com](mailto:alexshey@hotmail.com)

I. In your opinion, what is globalization? How does globalization affect you as an American citizen?

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II. For each value, circle its importance in your life?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	No opinion
Family	1	2	3	4	5
Friends	1	2	3	4	5
Hobbies	1	2	3	4	5
Individuality	1	2	3	4	5
Work	1	2	3	4	5
Religion	1	2	3	4	5
Helping others	1	2	3	4	5
Concern for yourself	1	2	3	4	5
Politics	1	2	3	4	5
Education	1	2	3	4	5
Cultural diversity	1	2	3	4	5

III. Please write what you think are the most important values in America and in France.

America	France
1) _____	1) _____
2) _____	2) _____
3) _____	3) _____
4) _____	4) _____
5) _____	5) _____

IV. For each product please indicate its affect on American culture.

	Positive effect	No effect	Negative effect		
Coca-Cola	1	2	3	4	5
McDonalds	1	2	3	4	5
Disney	1	2	3	4	5
Television/Filmes	1	2	3	4	5
Politics and world affairs	1	2	3	4	5
Other _____	1	2	3	4	5

	Important	Maybe/ Don't care	Not Important		
1) I would pay more for products from a company that is socially responsible	1	2	3	4	5
2) I consider the moral reputation of a products company	1	2	3	4	5
3) I will pay more for products that give back to my community	1	2	3	4	5
4) If the quality of the products is the same for two different companies, I would buy from the socially responsible company	1	2	3	4	5
5) I prefer name brands for necessities items (i.e. food, drinks, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
6) I prefer name brands for luxury items	1	2	3	4	5



V. Circle the correct answer for you.

1) Political and social affiliations of a product determine whether or not I will buy it?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Maybe
- d) I don't know
- e) I don't care

2) In your opinion, do certain products lead to the spread of globalization?

- a) Yes, indicate which \_\_\_\_\_
- b) No
- c) Maybe
- d) I don't know
- e) I don't care

3) Do consumer products have a global message?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Maybe
- d) I don't know
- e) I don't care

4) Where do you live?

- a) large city
- b) small city
- c) town
- d) village

5) What is your completed level of education?

- a) no high school
- b) high school
- c) community college (A.A.)
- d) university (undergraduate)
- e) university (graduate)
- f) university (doctorate)

6) What is your sex and age?

- a) man
- b) woman

age \_\_\_\_\_



Mecca Cola is a beverage that has the same flavor as Coca-Cola.

Mecca donates 20% to aid organizations (10% Palestinian, 10% European).

Would you be inclined to buy this product and why?

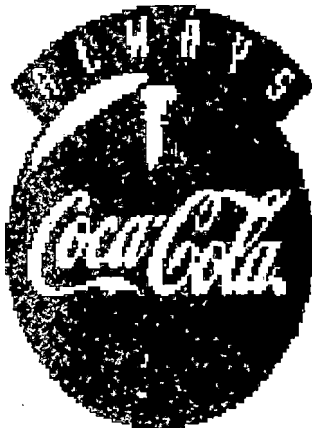
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What does Coca-Cola signify to you?

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What are the differences between Mecca-Cola and Coca-Cola?

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APPENDIX D  
FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES -  
A COMPARATIVE SURVEY FRENCH VERSION

**France and the United States – A Comparative Survey**  
**“La France et le Mondialization – Sondage”**

L'enquete suivante est le travail de recherché d'un etudiant Americain diplome. Le but de ce questionnaire est de comparer les perceptions de mondialization entre la France et l'Amerique. Pour le restant du questionnaire “L’Amerique” fera reference aux Etats-Unies. Le questionnaire demande votre honnete opinion. Il n’y a pas de bonne ou mauvaise reponse. Les segments suivant devrait prendre 10 minutes pour y repondre. Toutes les reponses resteront anonym et no seront pas utilisees par un establishment prive (pour profit). S’il vous plait, n’indiquez ni votre nom ou votre adresse sur le questionnaire. Si vous desirez plus de renseignements au sujet de ce travail de recherche et/ou les resultants finals, envoyez une e-mail au coordinateur du projet a: [alexshay@hotmail.com](mailto:alexshay@hotmail.com)

I. A votre avis, que signifie le mondialization? Comment le mondialization vous effecte t’elle comme citoyen Francais?

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II. Pour chaque question suivante, indiquez l’importance de cette culture sur votre vie. Mettez un cercle autour de la reponse correcte.

	Tres imporant	Quelque peu important	Pas tres important	Pas imp. de tout	Pas d’opinion
Famille	1	2	3	4	5
Ainis	1	2	3	4	5
Loisirs	1	2	3	4	5
Individualite	1	2	3	4	5
Travail	1	2	3	4	5
Religion	1	2	3	4	5
Service a d’autres	1	2	3	4	5
Soi-meme	1	2	3	4	5
Politique	1	2	3	4	5
Education	1	2	3	4	5
Diversite culturelle	1	2	3	4	5

III. Indiquez ce que vous percevez être les plus importantes valeurs de:

L'Amérique	La France
1) _____	1) _____
2) _____	2) _____
3) _____	3) _____
4) _____	4) _____
5) _____	5) _____

IV. Pour chaque produit suivant, indiquez comment ces produits affectent la culture Françaises.

	Effet positif	Pas d'effet	Effet négatif		
Coca-Cola	1	2	3	4	5
McDonalds	1	2	3	4	5
Disney	1	2	3	4	5
La télévision/les films Américains	1	2	3	4	5
La politique/les affaires Américaines	1	2	3	4	5
Autre _____	1	2	3	4	5

	Important	Peut-être/ Cela m'est égal	Pas Important		
1) Je payerais plus pour acheter des produits d'une compagnie socialement responsables	1	2	3	4	5
2) Je considère la réputation morale d'une compagnie socialement responsables	1	2	3	4	5
3) Je payerais plus pour acheter des produits d'une compagnie soucieuse de bien-être de notre société	1	2	3	4	5
4) Si le prix et la qualité de 2 produits sont équivalents, j'achèterais plutôt de la compagnie ayant une réputation socialement responsable	1	2	3	4	5
5) Je préfère acheter une marque de boisson qui m'est familière	1	2	3	4	5

V. Faites un cercle autour de la reponse correte, a votre avis.

1) Les affiliations (socials, politiques) d'un produit determinant-ils votre inclination d'achat?

- a) Oui
- b) Non
- c) Peut-etre
- d) Je ne sais pas
- e) Cela m'est egal

2) A votre opinion, certains produits representent-ils le procede de mondialization?

- a) Oui, indiquez \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Non
- c) Peut-etre
- d) Je ne sais pas
- e) Cela m'est egal

3) Les produits de consommation portent-ils un message mondial?

- a) OI
- b) Non
- c) Peut-etre
- d) Je ne sais pas
- e) Cela m'est egal

4) Ou habitez-vous?

- a) quartier metropolitain
- b) cite ou grande ville
- c) ville
- d) village

5) Quel est votre niveau d'education?

- a) pas d'ecole superieure
- b) ecole superieure
- c) institute technique
- d) universite
- e) universite (maitrise)
- f) universite (doctorat)

6) Quel est votre sexe et age?

- a) homme
- b) femme

age \_\_\_\_\_



Est-ce que cette pub vous inciterais a acheter ce produit? Pour quoi?

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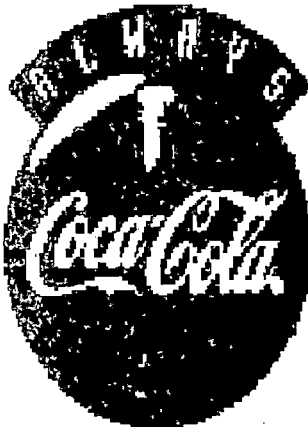
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Qu'est-ce que Coca-Cola signifie pour vous?

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Entre Coca-Cola et Mecca-Cola, quels sont les differences?

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