Preface

Globalizing knowledge.

The term is powerful. It is most commonly used when we speak of bringing insights from around the world into a university's research and teaching. But like all concepts useful for mobilizing resources, "globalizing knowledge" conceals much while allowing its connotations to do a lot of work. They do too much work for the critically inclined.

Knowledge depends on information. We are all familiar with the ways in which the information and communication technology revolution has affected the global spread of images, symbols, sounds, ideologies, repertoires, and even ideas. But when we speak of knowledge, we imply a superior sort of understanding. It is more refined, rigorous, and reflexive. Knowledge can't flow so easily as other virtual expressions because it must be sifted, reassembled, and assessed. And that means that its nodes of accumulation and transformation matter even in a world of information flows.

This mattering does not always work in traditionally knowledgeable ways. As reputations globalize, the distinction of knowledge nodes seems to depend more and more on forms of acknowledgment relatively divorced from knowledge as such. Distinction is dissolved into recognition. Recognition morphs into celebrity. Hit lists of the world's most important universities and thinkers then become the most visible arbiters of knowledge quality. This globalizing effect transforms the meaning of knowledge. It flattens the world's learning

and commodifies its producers and their products. It also hides the abiding knowledge inequalities that shape our sense of the world.

Many in my discipline of sociology resisted using the word *globalization* for its distraction from the agency and privilege involved in the world's transformation. Words like *imperialism*, or research programs associated with concepts like the world system, highlighted who got what, thus begging us to explain why. Globalization, in contrast, implied a reorganization to which all had to adapt to win, or even to survive. It distracted us from questions not only of who loses but how victory might depend on others' defeats. "Globalizing knowledge" has a similar problem.

When people talk about it, or use other euphemisms, like "internationalizing a university," they conjure a worldly image in which insights flow from across the world to the node they inhabit. However, interests, tastes, prejudices, and power shape that learning flow. They repackage learning's assembly in ways that are hardly neutral, much less scientific or universal. Globalizing knowledge easily masks ethnocentrism's expression, just as it has hidden cosmopolitanism's limits.

Counterposed to provincialism or nationalism, cosmopolitanism is nonetheless shaped by the worldly circuits its proponent values. It's difficult, if not impossible, to imagine a cosmopolitan disposition that is devoid of interests, tastes, prejudice, or power. But to the extent that cosmopolitanism is inhabited by a sufficiently diverse array with a commitment to intellectuality as such, that cosmopolitanism is more respectful of the broader world we inhabit. It is more curious about that world's dimensions we do not yet know. All other things being equal, such a cosmopolitan intellectuality becomes a quality of globalizing knowledge even the critically minded might embrace. Indeed, I would like to think of universities in those terms, at least potentially. A genuinely globalizing knowledge requires cosmopolitan intellectuality. The publicly minded, however, might demand more.

Globalizing knowledge does not necessarily connote anything about people beyond the worlds of learning as such. Many still justify knowledge for its own sake, but many more likely value it for its benefits. They appreciate how it increases the power and privilege of its patrons or augments the public good of the communities in which the knowledgeable and their institutions reside. Just by virtue of that public question, one should imagine the proponents of globalizing knowledge wondering about how public identifications work in their ambitions. And it goes further.

The recognition of knowledge reflects not just its intrinsic value but also the power and privilege organizing the systems in which that recognition functions. Thus, it is difficult for such a lofty notion as globalizing knowledge to be at ease residing only among those already claiming to own it. Imagine, for instance, how much poorer the world would be without the globalization of jazz music, and how racism, class privilege, and art music arrogance conspired in its repression in the last century.

Jazz has traveled the world just as many other products associated with less privileged knowledgeabilities have. This has led some to be concerned for the expropriation embedded in such global flows. Insights produced in communities can be stripped from their producers. The social relations in which that knowledge was embedded can be lost as learning is decontextualized. Globalizing knowledge, neither in its intrinsic qualities nor with its various connotations, has much to say about such exploitations. It should.

Here, I clearly move beyond my immanent concerns for globalizing knowledge and shift into a question that is both pragmatic and associational. After all, intellectuals and their institutions have moved increasingly to consider their public responsibilities. However, the publics to which they refer are typically proximate. Cosmopolitan intellectuals might ask why proximity should rule out distant publics. They should ask us to rethink those obligations on various scales within and beyond the nation. One might even invoke a notion of solidarity so that the choice to bear the burdens of others becomes an intrinsic part of the quest to learn from them. Indeed, I think for globalizing knowledge to become more than a pretentious slogan and comforting complement for cosmopolitan intellectuality, we must understand what a more consequential solidarity could mean in the articulations of globalizing knowledge. This is more than the challenge of difference. This is also a matter of combining diversity's recognition with a question of figuring our ties and the responsibilities that brings with it. Difference and connectivity combine when solidarity animates.

In order to move beyond the slogans and appreciate more adequately these complex relationships between knowledges and global transformations, we need a better set of orienting questions, methodological approaches, and integrating theories than we now enjoy. In this volume, I focus on articulations of globalizing knowledge through which I explore cultural schema organizing the recognition of intellectual responsibility and the valuation of knowledge institutions and networks. I am especially interested to elaborate those

schema that not only conserve and transmit wisdom but also anticipate transformations that could make the world better. I am particularly concerned with those that engage publics, recognize difference, and acknowledge the world of flows, especially in terms of energy. This is, then, a cultural political sociology of knowledge *and* change. I not only analyze the dynamics of knowledge in certain fields but focus on how they might be rearticulated and designed. In the process, I wish to make global transformations more subject to inclusive and rational critical discussion in their address and practice.

Those are the intentions, and this is the argument.

The specialization of knowledge has made many doubt the virtue, and even relevance, of the intellectual as an actor shaping change. However, the term's necessary reference to questions of responsibility make its sociology essential for rearticulating the implication of knowledge in change. Not only need we consider how media refashion intellectuals as celebrities and remake possibilities for their public value; we also need to figure how universities are transformed in that context. As organizations with their own logics, they do not necessarily express an institutional responsibility derived from their associations with intellectual responsibility. However, their legitimation depends at least partially on an affirmation of intellectuality's culture of critical discourse. Questions of intellectual responsibility thus can have distinctive effect on such institutions and their social environments. That effect is magnified when associated with increasingly knowledgeable public engagements. But which publics matter?

The first step in linking theories of knowledge with the practice of knowledgeable *and inclusive* change is to make explicit articulations of intellectual and institutional responsibility to *various* publics. A second step is to locate those elaborations not only in their contexts but also in the world of flows. After all, the increasingly intense movement of, among other things, knowledge, people, wealth, and weapons across borders of all sorts has changed our sense of the proximities and relevance of various publics. The connectivity generated by such movements should also, however, reinvigorate our sense of priorities in the articulation of intellectual and institutional responsibilities. It invites us to enter the world of design to refashion the kinds of knowledge networks that can recognize both the challenge of difference and the promise of connectivity across disparate contexts. In order for that invitation to work, we need a resonant frame to organize our cumulative effort.

To be cosmopolitan is no longer a philosophical attitude accented with awareness of the world's diversity and beauty. It is developed in a practice of

learning shaped by thoughts of not only what matters most and why but how the distribution of knowledge across the world shapes our perceptions of what we need to know. When that cosmopolitan disposition articulates the formation and practice of knowledge networks, the possibilities for symbolic expressions of worldly awareness and practices of knowledgeable and consequential solidarity grow. And with that, chances of our world thriving, and even surviving, increase. That, at least, is an article of faith that motivates this volume.

In short, I hope to stimulate an approach and methodology with which intellectuals and their institutions and networks can rearticulate a culture of critical discourse around global public responsibility. Many already claim to be globalizing knowledge. Too few appreciate the range of challenges involved in that articulation. Even fewer offer inspired practice. I hope to augment the significance of those to whom I refer in the last two sentences and shake the presumption of those in the first.

To write such a book that ranges across knowledge cultures and the world appears to reflect incredible hubris, but I offer it with humility. I expect challenges and alterations of all sorts. And that is its ambition: to move a better array of answers and inspire a better set of questions than I typically find within and across knowledge institutions and networks. Too often our culture of critical discourse is caught within the terms of knowledge cultures founded in moments radically unlike the times in which we live, or in emergent spaces without the means to develop ideas and practices with sufficient resource. In both cases, knowledgeable change is hemmed in by organizational cultures animated by power and privilege built to reproduce their own past paths to influence. To judge that constraint as simply wrong is to be sociologically naïve; but to say that is inevitable is to be deadly ignorant.

As I write, concluding composition in January 2014, the world is in immediate crisis. I know, long after this book is published, that the world shall remain in foundational crisis. My hope is that this volume will join with other efforts in moving those with the privilege of disproportionate time to think to act in ways that will help make change more knowledgeable. I count on the power of knowledge networks to make it so, for I have seen already how transformative they can be. At least they have changed me.

I am indebted to many for the transformative learning curve I have enjoyed, limited and rich as it has been.

My formative years (1986–2009) as a professor were at the University of Michigan, where in addition to my duties as a member of the sociology

department I had the privilege of directing a number of interdisciplinary and international units, including its International Institute, Weiser Center for Europe and Eurasia, Weiser Center for Emerging Democracies, Center for Russian and East European Studies, Center for European Studies / European Union Center for Excellence, and Program for the Comparative Study of Social Transformations. I also served as the university's first vice provost for international affairs. All my colleagues and students at Michigan were very generous in shaping how I learned about globalizing knowledge.

I have spent much less time at Brown University, but directing its Watson Institute for International Studies has offered exceptional opportunities to learn about the challenges and opportunities of globalizing knowledge, especially for the networks its graduates and donors crafted for its students and faculty. I have been especially moved in this space to think about the connections between international studies, policy making, and public engagements of both actual and virtual sorts. Beyond these networks, students of Brown are the most remarkable, making this liberal arts college in transition to research university a source of abiding energy and transformative vision.

All professors are marked by their institutional homes, but the networks in which they travel are more varied. I have been especially engaged in the networks associated with the regions of my scholarly focus. In addition to sociology circles I have benefited from a variety of conversations in the area studies tradition, most especially in European and Eurasian studies. Those conversations have themselves led to others without obvious regional accent, especially networks shaped by the Social Science Research Council and the Open Society Foundations. Material and collegial support from the Watson Institute for International Studies, the Department of Sociology at Brown University, the Academic Fellowship Program of the Open Society Foundations, and the Social Science Research Council for the project "Engaging Afghanistan" have also helped a great deal. I am especially grateful to all those at Stanford University Press, especially Frances Malcolm, Tim Roberts, Cynthia Lindlof, Jenny Gavacs, and my anonymous reviewers, who have made this book so much better than it could have ever been without them. But in the end, it is the particular individuals with whom we learn over the long haul that count.

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* † indicates that the person is now deceased.

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And my final thanks are to you who read this, who carry forward my riff on my dissertation adviser's question. When Gerhard Lenski asked in 1966, "Who gets what and why?," he summarized and motivated a great tradition in the sociology of inequality. I invoke his pithiness and commitment to the parsimonious with this question: Who is intellectually responsible, and why? If we ask that in all of our circumstances, we might actually help produce the cosmopolitan intellectuality and consequential solidarity we need to thrive, we need to survive.