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### What *Makes* a “Distinguished Global Scholar” in Global Education? (Trans)formative Experiences Towards Global Mindedness

### Qu'est-ce qui *qualifie* un « éminent chercheur mondial » dans l'éducation mondiale ? Expériences (trans)formatives vers un esprit mondial

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Article abstract

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# What *Makes* a “Distinguished Global Scholar” in Global Education? (Trans)formative Experiences Towards Global Mindedness

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**What *Makes* a “Distinguished Global Scholar” in Global Education? (Trans)formative Experiences Towards Global Mindedness**  
**Qu’est-ce qui *qualifie* un « éminent chercheur mondial » dans l’éducation mondiale?**  
**Expériences (trans)formatives vers un esprit mondial**

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**Abstract**

Having an *international* experience, often through study abroad, has been a consistent theme in global education. There are a multitude of research studies on how international experiences foster global mindedness. In these studies, it is common for researchers to ask participants to reflect on their international experiences. In contrast, we took an alternative and slightly experimental qualitative approach to dig into the processes of becoming globally minded. Using existing and documented narratives as data, we examined the life-long learning processes of 13 “distinguished global scholars.” Our study illuminates the (trans)formative experiences that contributed to their global mindedness. Four common themes emerged from our analysis: (1) experiencing war and/or political tension; (2) encountering social injustice; (3) engaging with sociocultural difference; and (4) leaving the familiar/reaching out to the unknown. The findings and discussion deepen the understanding of how global mindedness is developed and offer insights for educational interventions.

**Résumé**

Vivre une expérience internationale, souvent par le biais d’études à l’étranger, est un thème récurrent de l’éducation mondiale. Il existe une multitude d’études sur la manière dont les expériences internationales favorisent le développement d’un esprit mondial. Dans ces études, il est de norme pour les chercheurs de demander aux participants de penser à leurs expériences internationales. Par contraste, nous avons adopté une approche qualitative différente et légèrement expérimentale pour étudier les processus de développement de l’esprit mondial. En utilisant des récits existants et documentés comme données, nous avons examiné les processus d’apprentissage tout au long de la vie de 13 « éminents chercheurs mondiaux ». Notre étude met en lumière les expériences (trans)formatives qui ont contribué à leur esprit mondial. Quatre thèmes communs ont émergé de notre analyse : (1) avoir fait l’expérience de la guerre et/ou des tensions politiques; (2) avoir rencontré l’injustice sociale; (3) s’être engagé dans les différences socioculturelles; et (4) avoir quitté le familier/être allé vers l’inconnu. Les résultats et la discussion permettent de mieux comprendre comment se développe un esprit mondial et offrent des pistes pour les interventions éducatives.

Keywords: global mindedness, global education, identity, transformative experience

Mots clés : esprit mondial, éducation mondiale, identité, expérience transformatrice

## Introduction

Under heightened global connectivity, migration, and cultural/educational flows of recent decades (Appadurai, 1996; Rizvi, 2009; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009), forms of global/international education have gained much prominence (Mannion et al., 2011; Merryfield, 2012; Pike, 2008). Increasingly, we hear demands that schooling should develop students who are globally knowledgeable and aware, with a sense of responsibility to diverse others in an interdependent and precarious natural and human-made world. Various terms are used to describe these idealizations of what students are supposed to learn and how they are supposed to be; for example, we hear calls for education to develop learners to become “global citizens” (UNESCO, 2017), “internationally minded” (IBO, 2017), and “globally competent” (OECD, 2018; OME, 2015). While these terms (among others) have distinctive meanings/translations depending on their conceptual starting points and discursive interlocutors, they all basically refer to a set of learner dispositions that forms of global education aim to foster. In this study we use the term “global mindedness” as an open, overarching term to signify these desired pedagogical effects or outcomes of global education. Rather than formalistically prescribing a fixed definition, we seek to inductively explore global mindedness by studying how it develops via empirical processes (Kurasawa, 2007).

This grounded qualitative research orientation is important because the many rationales and prescriptions for developing globally minded students and prospective citizens tend to outrace deeper understandings of what global mindedness entails or ought to entail and how it emerges (Tarc et al., 2012). In our research, we take a step back from the dominant focus on idealizations of, and prescriptions for, global education, as well as on school-based interventions for global mindedness (Tarc, 2013, 2018). Rather, our priority is to illuminate, in a more fundamental way, the experiential and lifelong processes of becoming globally minded. In this present study, we engage this priority by examining the experiences and reflections of a group of scholars who have advanced or are continuing to advance the U.S.-based global education movement. Our chosen objects of analysis are 13 autobiographical or biographical narratives presented in the edited collection, *The Global Education Movement: Narratives of Distinguished Global Scholars* (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2018a).

The term “makes” in the question posed in our title, “what *makes* a distinguished global scholar...,” can be read in two ways. First, it can point to the criteria used to be recognized as a *distinguished* global scholar in the domain of late 20th century-based global education. The edited collection addresses this reading, via documentations of the significant contributions these scholar-educators have made to the field of global education in the United States. In consistency with the selected source of data, we also use the phrase “distinguished global scholars,” but “distinguished” as an identity marker did not add any significance to the quality of data in our analysis. Second, “makes” can refer to the *enabling conditions and processes of becoming* a globally minded scholar-educator. Our study focuses on this second meaning, as in, what larger histories and personal experiences make and shape such a globally minded scholar-educator. Specifically, by analyzing the biographical and autobiographical accounting in each of the book’s chapters, we illuminate both common and unique features of experience and *perspective change* that have *made* these scholars leaders in global education. Our textual analysis is guided by the following core research questions:

- (1) What were the formative and transformative experiences of the 13 global scholars in becoming globally minded scholars?
- (2) What do these experiences have in common and what are their unique qualities?

Following this introduction, the paper has four subsequent sections. First, as a point of entry and as a working frame for our findings, we briefly situate the pedagogical ideal of global mindedness within global education. Next, we outline our methodological approach and detail our method of analyzing the autobiographical and biographical accounts. The penultimate section presents the findings of our analysis of the narratives, and because our core contribution lies in this thick illumination of the processes by which the represented global scholars have become globally minded, all other sections have been presented with brevity in mind. Finally, we discuss the implications and significance of our findings as a conclusion to the paper.

### **Global Education and the Processes of Becoming Globally Minded**

As more basic research, our focus is to enhance thicker and more nuanced understandings of the desired pedagogical effects of global education, a phenomenon that we call “global mindedness” in this study. Without a fixed definition, we tether global mindedness in its vernacular sense to such learner dispositions as: open mindedness, intercultural sensitivity, awareness of a wider world, etc. In this study we primarily seek to shed light on the experiential processes of becoming globally minded. In this section we briefly unpack the relations between global education and the formative and transformative experiences that potentially lead to global mindedness.

Prior to our current COVID crisis, developing global mindedness from an international experience such as study abroad had become a rising trend with secondary- and postsecondary-level students (Ramaswamy & Ramaswamy, 2016; Wilson, 1986) and one of the dominant registers of global education (Lewin, 2009; Tiessen & Huish, 2014). Research studies on short-term study abroad with youth are plentiful (Twombly et al., 2012; Walters et al., 2016). Nevertheless, these research studies face several challenges, such as, the shortness/superficiality of the international experience itself, the reliance on self-reporting in the data collection phase, and the lack of time for students to appreciate how the experience has or has not had an impact (Kiely, 2004). Study abroad experiences are often promoted under the labels of “transformative” and “life-changing,” but these labels and their supporting discourses have also attracted critical scrutiny (Chakravarty et al., 2020; Michelson & Álvarez Valencia, 2016; Moreno, 2021), raising questions regarding the effectiveness of learning during the study abroad sojourn and the sustainability of participants’ change over a longer temporal arc (Kiely, 2004). Tarc (2013) found that even teachers who have spent considerable years living overseas struggle to understand and articulate the existential impacts of their experience and how they have, or have not, become more worldly or interculturally aware.

Considering these questions and challenges, we view experience in its broader sense and beyond the limits of institutionalized learning activities; also, we as researchers do not intentionally privilege certain experiences, such as study abroad, over others simply because they are more popular or held in higher regard by current global education discourse. Instead, we try to follow the chapter narrators’ interpretations on the qualities and significance of their formative and transformative experience that led them to be distinguished global scholars. We are open to the possibility that multiple kinds of experience can catalyze perspective transformation (Mezirow, 2008) in the direction of global mindedness.

The 13 narratives we are examining in this study are situated in “the global education movement,” as suggested in the title of the edited collection (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2018a). In some sense, the longer-running 20th-century global education movement arose from a growing awareness of a shrinking world with problems that required international collaboration and

problem solving (for example, see Méras, 1932). In the edited collection, Kirkwood-Tucker (2018a) provided an updated articulation in her introduction:

In education, the impact of globalization on humanity necessitates a paradigm shift that will empower youth in the United States and other nations with a deep knowledge of the world, a positive attitude toward those perceived as different, and a sense of responsibility to the world community. (p. xix)

This needed “paradigm shift” to empower youth to be knowledgeable about the world, to be open to difference, and to feel responsibility to a “world community” illustrates the pedagogical goal of global education as developing global mindedness. Our study seeks to illuminate how such global mindedness has developed and evolved in the cases of our 13 distinguished global scholars.

## Methods

This study takes a different tack from conducting yet another set of participant interviews with relatively young sojourners, who are asked to reflect on the learning outcomes of their *abroad* experience. We study the phenomenon of fostering and changing one’s perspective from a biographical or autobiographical stance, and across a longer temporal arc. We consider the narratives of the global scholars as already-existing data, circumscribed within chapter contributions of this edited collection. While the content in each narrative may not contain all the relevant data we are seeking, there is also an upside: since we did not orchestrate the conditions that produced the data, we have not had any influence on this data source itself. In examining already-existing narratives from globally minded, life-long educator-scholars, we avoid shaping the participant narratives from our own perspectives and frames. Our biases then do not enter until the document analysis phase. Each chapter or narrative documents a portion of a “life story” (McAdams, 2008), a collection of personal stories of experiences, lived by one scholar. These narratives are also condensed forms of life histories due to the space limitation in the edited collection. Most of these narratives are autobiographical, with four exceptions regarding the four scholars who had already passed away when the edited collection was composed. First, Kirkwood-Tucker (2018b), the editor of the collection, wrote the biography for James Becker, in which selections of Becker’s first-person recounting of his personal life was included and organized chronologically. Second, Barbara Cruz (2018) wrote the biography for Jan Tucker; Tucker had been Cruz’s major professor of her doctoral program and a long-time mentor. The third account is a combined narrative of a scholar couple, Charlotte and the late Lee Anderson, penned by Charlotte Anderson (2018) in an autobiographic style. The fourth exception is Kenneth Tye’s biography written by his wife Barbara Benham Tye (2018); she uses the first-person point of view, so it reads like an autobiography. Apart from these four, each narrative is a scholar’s autobiographical account of his or her own life trajectory from childhood to their status as “distinguished scholar” in the global education movement.

Before conducting our analysis, we first used the two research questions (see Introduction) to determine which sections of narrative content were relevant for the analysis. After this filtering phase, our method of analysis was inductive in “establish[ing] patterns or themes” (Creswell, 2007, p. 37) emerging from the coding of the relevant sections. In this study we mainly employed a thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2012) to identify themes from the narratives.

In our research, the initial and preliminary content analysis overlapped with skimming and reading in the aforementioned procedure of document analysis, during which we intended to identify “meaningful and relevant passages of text” (Bowen, 2009, p. 32). For each chapter in the book, we first skimmed through the text in large chunks, and ranked each section as “high priority,”

“low priority,” or “uncertain,” based on its relevance to our research questions. Since our focus was on lived experiences, sections focusing on topics such as publications, projects accomplished, awards and endorsements received, were marked as “low priority.” On the other hand, sections that contain first-person, descriptive, and detailed accounts of experience were given high priority. Through skimming and reading, we became familiar with the entire 13 chapters and identified passages most meaningful to our research questions.

Next, we conducted a thematic analysis, following a procedure from Braun and Clarke (2012) that includes generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing, then defining and naming themes. During the phase of generating initial codes, we read each chapter again. In this round of reading, we assigned initial codes to each experience highlighted in the previous round. In line with the inductive and data-driven nature of a thematic analysis, we focused on “coding the data without trying to fit it into a preexisting coding frame, or the researcher’s analytic preconceptions” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 83).

Then we began to search for themes, first by connecting codes from each scholar’s narrative, and afterwards by comparing similar codes across narratives. After having identified a series of common patterns of significant experiences, or potential themes, we started the phase of reviewing themes. During this final phase of analysis, we checked whether these potential themes were significant in the context of each related narrative. We also put together all the codes from related narratives that confirmed the significance of a common theme to check the theme’s coherence across the narratives. In this reviewing process, we dropped a few patterns of significant experiences identified in the previous stage, due to their lack of coherence or lack of supportive evidence. We also reviewed minor themes and, where possible, combined overlapping ones into major themes.

### **Findings: Becoming Globally Minded**

The 13 scholars included in the book experienced distinct life trajectories before coming into their leadership roles in global education in the United States. For the most part, these scholars came of age in the late 20th century with the United States emerging as the dominant global power. Not surprisingly, each had unique and impactful experiences that shaped their identity and perspective. Nevertheless, in considering these diverse experiences, a few *common* patterns emerge, in part, because of the larger conditions and contexts in which their experiences were embedded.

In this section, we report the experiences and reflections of each scholar as represented by the author of the respective chapter. The specific claims made on the individual scholar’s history, experiences and/or insights, thus, come directly from the accounts presented in the chapters and are not our speculations as the analysts. For readability, we do not constantly include phrases as “according to the author” or as “reported in the chapter.” Four core themes emerged from our analysis:

1. Experiencing war and/or political tension
2. Encountering social injustice
3. Engaging with sociocultural difference
4. Leaving the familiar/reaching out to the unknown

#### ***Experiencing War and Political Tension***

Multiple scholars reflect on the significance of their experiences with wars and conflict, as these experiences prompted their reconsideration of the role of education and encouraged their

involvement in the global education movement. Two of them, James Becker and Toni Fuss Kirkwood-Tucker, experienced World War II directly.

At the age of 22, James Becker joined the U.S. army and fought the war in Europe from 1942 to 1945. Participation in the war was life-changing, as he noted: “The dramatic newscasts leading up to the War and participating in the War as a tank commander in the liberation of Europe were major influences on my career and focus on international and global politics and education” (Kirkwood-Tucker & Goldstein, 2007, as cited in Kirkwood-Tucker, 2018b, p. 6). Becker’s prewar education instilled in him a relatively uncritical perspective regarding conflicts among nations and a citizen’s role in these conflicts: “Having first learned about war in the 1920’s when patriotic fervor engendered by World War I was still in vogue, I probably acquired attitudes about such conflicts and impressions without serious thought” (Becker, n.d., as cited in Kirkwood-Tucker, 2018b, p. 27). Participating in the war, however, completely challenged these attitudes. He might have had a series of critical incidents as an American soldier crossing the Atlantic and fighting in Europe, culminating with a pivotal moment on Victory Day, when he was relieved but was without joy after witnessing “too much destruction and human misery” (Becker, 2006, as cited in Kirkwood-Tucker, 2018b, p. 5). After the war, his perspective on conflicts and international relations became transformed: “Seeing the results of war convinced me that war is not the last resort as politicians were telling us, but a futile way to seek to resolve conflicts among nations.” (Kirkwood-Tucker & Goldstein, 2007, as cited in Kirkwood-Tucker, 2018b, p. 2) From this point on, he was resolved to prevent wars among nations and took up education as the way to work for a more peaceful world.

The other scholar reporting first-hand experiences with World War II is Kirkwood-Tucker (2018c). She grew up in Germany during the Nazi era. She recalled the tragedies she witnessed as a child when her relatives and neighbours lost their loved ones to the war. The fear she had when allied bombers flew past her village has stuck in her memory throughout her life. These childhood experiences alongside the influence of her dissident father, who, in solidarity with Jewish people, secretly rebelled against the Nazi regime, were formative. Similar to Becker, personal and direct experiences with the war informed her strong opposition to war and her commitments to global education.

Although never having participated directly, other scholars, including the Andersons and Kenneth Tye, also shared vivid memories from the time of World War II. Recollecting hers and her husband’s childhood years, scholar Charlotte Anderson mentioned how the war arrived at their hometown “in the form of 10-year-old boys defending the ‘Home Front’, prisoners of war (POWs) working the fields, and internment of Japanese Americans” (Anderson, 2018, p. 60). While still a schoolboy, Ken Tye’s experience of the war came through his volunteer work as an aircraft spotter (Tye, 2018).

The experiences with World War II were not limited to the years of the war itself, but also its aftermath and lingering effects. For example, Lee Anderson witnessed allied soldiers patrolling downtown Vienna when he was studying in the still occupied Austria (Anderson, 2018). Hahn’s (2018) uncle served in the U.S. army and was posted in the postwar Germany. Ken Tye taught in postwar Germany in the 1950s, and according to his description, “even 10 years after [Victory in Europe] Day [...] every town and city still showed signs of the war: bombed-out buildings and rubble everywhere” (Tye, 2018, p. 202). Wilson (2018) recalled her father having “been involved in planning town hall meetings” (p. 292) in the last years of the war. Also, during a summer job at a Cleveland settlement house camp, she worked with Udo, a camp counsellor from Germany: “I remember Udo telling us about the Russians arriving at Berlin at the end of World War II” (p.



293). To these scholars, their postwar experiences often served as a reminder of the devastation of war and how deep a mark it had left on world history and the collective memory of people from near and far.

When narrating their formative experiences, many scholars in the book also recounted the impact of other conflicts during their socialization. These were historical periods of international conflicts when political tensions were high between the United States and other nations. Two such signature times mentioned in many narratives were the Cold War and the Vietnam War.

In her autobiography, Hahn described memories from growing up in the atmosphere of the Cold War, including the Cuban missile crisis. Even more impactful was the Vietnam War, which she described as “the darkest cloud hanging over [her] generation” (Hahn, 2018, p. 328). Both Grossman and Wilson also noted the missile crisis in the narratives. Unlike Hahn, however, they were both abroad when the incident occurred. Grossman was studying in India and got a taste of the incident from the perspective of the “Other.” In his own words, “the crisis was literally over before we became aware of it in India” (Grossman, 2018, p. 262). Wilson was volunteering for the Peace Corp in Liberia during the missile crisis, when she became concerned about her family and cities back home that might become targets of a potential Russian nuclear attack.

As the only African-born scholar included in the book, Josiah Tlou (2018) experienced the impact of war and tension between pre-independent African nations and their colonial powers (Rhodesia and Britain in his case). Tlou’s case is unique because it represents the intersection of three themes of this paper (conflict and war, social injustice, and migration). The unfair treatment of Africans in Rhodesia resulted in struggles that escalated into “guerrilla warfare waged by African nationalists” (Tlou, 2018, p. 220). The then Smith government’s unilateral declaration of independence served as a tipping point that intensified anti-colonial warfare on the one hand, and the torturing and locking up of dissenting Africans on the other. Tlou escaped Rhodesia right before this tipping point, thanks to an opportunity to study in America, and thus avoided being arrested for “[having] openly opposed . . . the policies and practices of segregation” (Tlou, 2018, p. 221). One of his brothers and a brother-in-law of his were murdered by the colonial regime. Tlou’s trip to America, or “escape” from Rhodesia in his own words, was a turning point in his life and led to subsequent experiences that further shaped and, to some extent, transformed his worldview and perspective. We will return to these experiences later, but it is important to notice their link to the political tensions and conflicts in the place where he grew up.

### ***Encountering Social Injustice***

The second common theme of significant experiences regards personal encounters with social injustice such as racism and gender inequality. Many scholars have mentioned incidents from their personal experiences living through times marked by social unrest and injustice, and the impact such experiences have had on their lives. The most telling example comes from the narrative of Tlou, who was born and raised in the former British colony of (Southern) Rhodesia. Growing up as an African under the British colonial rule, he experienced racial segregation and other forms of discrimination firsthand. He vividly described these firsthand experiences of racism in his narrative. One telling example is the layout of the church, which visually represented the discrimination towards Africans in its crudest form:

The physical structure of the church was divided into European and African sections. There was no ceiling on the African side . . . The seats were planks and boards that were movable. The European side had comfortable pews, chairs and a ceiling. (Tlou, 2018, p. 219)

When once he and a friend attempted to sit on the European side of the church because the African section had been fully occupied, they were made to feel “greatly intimidated” and “uneasy throughout the service” by the humiliating staring from audience and the preacher’s reference of the devil’s way in people who assumed “seats which were not reserved for them” (p. 219). Tlou also described the unjust political system in Rhodesia, which assigned privileges exclusively to European settlers and denied Africans their rights to participate in governance.

The other scholars in the study are of European heritage and they were not direct victims of racial discrimination. However, many of them also recounted their experiences as *witnesses* of colonial and race-based injustice. Charlotte Anderson’s early-life encounters with Native Americans triggered her reflection on the deficits of the educational systems:

I recall being especially intrigued to see Native Americans [in a nearby town ...] I am now perplexed—and hope I might have been then—why in our fourth-grade lessons on “Indians” our information came from the textbook without reference to our own knowledge of or experiences with these nearly “neighbors.” (Anderson, 2018, p. 61)

Anderson (2018) also recounted her experience with racism as a student teacher, when she taught at “an all-or-mostly Black elementary school” that “had recently served a white community” (p. 69). She was rather uncomfortable with the demonstration given by a White male teacher on “how to use the sharp edge of [her] ruler to strike the hand of any ‘bad’ student [she] was sure to encounter” (p. 69). She also recalled the “flash of anger” she felt every time she drove through the racially divided Chicago neighbourhoods (p. 70).

Merry Merryfield (2018) grew up during “a time of overt racism,” as she recalled in her autobiography: “One of the transformative moments in my childhood was an experience when the everyday racism of my community led me to literally walk over Black bodies (pp. 122–123). She described this “theatre incident” that occurred on a Saturday afternoon in 1961 when she and her friends went to see a movie:

As we walked towards the ticket box we saw Black students protesting segregation by lying on the [pavement] in front of the theater and singing freedom songs. They were not allowed inside as Knoxville was segregated. A white usher came out to lead us over and around Black young people into the movie. It was a profound moment as I realized the privilege I had because my skin was white. (Merryfield, 2018, p. 123)

Such childhood experiences had an impact on her later life, including her choice of study at the university: “In an effort to understand the racism of my world, I majored in history and took all the courses offered in ‘Black History’” (p. 123). Besides racism in American society, she also recounted social justice issues arising while sojourning in Sierra Leone, from ethnic rivalries, abuse of power, human rights violations including female circumcision, to the British colonialism that “permeated the curriculum” in local schools (p. 125).

Kirkwood-Tucker (2018c) used the phrase “traumatizing experiences” (p. 151) to describe the racial discrimination she witnessed upon her arrival to the United States from Germany. Her earlier notion of America as a land of freedom and equality was utterly “shocked by the blatant segregation that African Americans in the United States had to endure in their daily lives” (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2018c, p. 150).

A few scholars in the book also mentioned instances of gender-based discrimination they experienced. “Gender stereotypes were common in the 1950s,” noted Torney-Purta (2018), and “[s]cientific subjects were unwelcoming to females” (p. 365). She recalled an incident in which the high school chemistry teacher was reluctant to give her an A grade despite her outstanding

performance in that class. Charlotte Anderson (2018) also recounted her direct experience with institutionalized sexism:

While all the men in my graduate-school “class” were inducted into a premier education honor society, Barbara Winston and I were not. This exclusion had nothing to do with our academic standing and everything to do with the fact that at that time the organization restricted membership to men only. (p. 72)

However, these women scholars were not kept down by these incidents. Torney-Purta (2018) eventually got the A she deserved, and against all odds, became a “data person” as she launched her life-long research career. Anderson (2018) joined women’s rights groups to work on policy change towards gender equity in her faculty.

### ***Engaging With Sociocultural Difference***

Engaging with difference is another pattern we identified from the narrated experiences of these global scholars. Merry Merryfield (2018) captured this theme well in her statement: “As I look back over my life, I find that my most critical learning came about as a result of interacting with people whose culture, experiences, or worldviews differed significantly from my own” (p. 122). Under this theme are intercultural experiences, which can be acquired at home and abroad, intentionally and unintentionally.

The unintentional engagement with diversities often occurred early in the lives of the authors and was associated with the not so “bounded” or “culturally homogenous” environment where the scholars grew up. For instance, Jan Tucker grew up in a “small but important railroad town” (Cruz, 2018, p. 39) and John Cogan (2018) recalled his childhood spent in an active shipping port. Kenneth Tye remembered growing up in Port Chicago: “a real melting pot [that] shaped my outlook” (Tye, 2018, p. 200). He played with other kids from Italian, Portuguese, Polish, Greek, and Swedish families, and in the 1930s, the town welcomed families from Oklahoma. Similarly, Grossman (2018) grew up in an “ethnically diverse community” (p. 260) and Torney-Purta (2018) spent her childhood in a community both “racially and culturally diverse” (p. 365). Wilson (2018) recalled her family sending “CARE package to ... Germany” (p. 293) and getting wooden puppets in return. The global perspectives of these scholars may find their roots in the early exposure to sociocultural difference as an integral part of their childhood experience, which they carried on into their adulthood and professional life. Jan Tucker, for example, would make friends with “outsiders” and “especially international people” (Cruz, 2018, p. 40) wherever he lived.

This engagement with differences can often be related to influence in early years from family members. Cogan (2018), for example, recalled the time spent with his missionary aunt:

I recall to this day, sitting at her feet in our living room, mesmerized by the stories she told of these wonderful people and places that she had visited, and I thought to myself that I too was going to visit many of these places when I grew up. (p. 101)

Although Wilson’s (2018) parents had never travelled outside the United States when she was a child, she believes that “their roots had been previously watered by a larger world and thus they were able to give us both roots and wings” (p. 292). Hahn (2018) was grateful to her grandmother who “planted the idea that travel to other countries is a wonderful enriching experience” (p. 327).

As young adults, these scholars often intentionally chose to expose themselves to difference. These intentional exposures are often connected to another theme we identified, “leaving the familiar and reaching out to the unknown,” a theme we present in the following section. In the current theme, we focus less on physical mobilities and more on cultural flows and

the willingness to learn about cultures, worldviews, and philosophies as well as foreign educational systems and practices.

One example of how intercultural encounters can stimulate critical reflection on one's perspective comes from Cogan's (2018) story. During his first trip to China, he found "the people to be completely different from anything [portrayed] by the U.S. media" and that "they were very much like [himself]" (p. 105). Merryfield's autobiography provides an even more telling example, where she recounted a moment from when she was teaching ninth grade world cultures and had invited a Nigerian guest speaker into her class. After the class, the speaker confided to her that the students "were not interested in the real Nigeria," but rather "the exotic, the superficial, the extreme, the Africa of the movies" (Merryfield, 2018, p. 124). This incident triggered her reflection on the content and curriculum of the course, which in turn impacted her research/career trajectory. She stated: "So began my lifelong critique of the way in which American schools teach about the world" (p. 124). After realizing the limitations of what American schools could teach about Africa, she also decided to experience Africa firsthand through volunteering for Peace Corps.

### ***Leaving the Familiar/Reaching Out to the Unknown***

The last theme includes international trips and incoming migrations—that is, stepping across different geographical and sociocultural spaces. These experiences are also closely related to the previous theme because the engagement with differences is often precipitated by leaving the familiar and encountering the foreign.

First, all scholars in the collection travelled internationally. Some studied abroad as undergraduate students. Lee Anderson, for example, got a scholarship to study at the University of Vienna during his junior year (Anderson, 2018). Grossman (2018) spent an academic year in India via the College Year in India program at Knox College. Wilson (2018) participated in a summer study abroad program in Paris. These global scholars highlighted the significance of their international trips in their development.

International travel also continued to be important for many scholars in their careers as globally minded educationalists. For example, Tucker led groups of American teachers to visit China and Japan as part of his research and teacher training work (Cruz, 2018). He and Kirkwood-Tucker also visited Russia on many occasions during their career (Cruz, 2018; Kirkwood-Tucker, 2018b). Other examples include Becker's first-time returning to Europe after the war while working for Atlantic Information Centre for teachers (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2018a), Cogan's (2018) trips to Japan and China to attend comparative education seminars, Merryfield's (2018) trip to Hong Kong as a visiting scholar, and Tye (2018) working in Oslo and Dubai, among other places. Travel also extended beyond study and work. As a married couple, Toni and Jan took a personal trip in Japan where they climbed Mount Fuji and visited Akita city (Cruz, 2018; Kirkwood-Tucker, 2018b). Wilson (2018) did her "retirement travel" with her husband to many African countries where they had formerly worked and had connection to, as well as Scotland, China, Guatemala, and Myanmar.

Many scholars acknowledged the significant impact of travelling, studying, and/or working abroad on their life and career. "[T]raveling to distant places," wrote Hahn (2018), is "a practice that continually renews my commitment to global education" (p. 330). Wilson (2018) also confirmed that "[i]nternational experience has an impact, including positive consequences for teachers, students, and schools" (p. 302). Reflecting on his career in global education, Cogan (2018) was grateful for the opportunity he had to travel to the "East Bloc" for his first education

seminar abroad. He described a key moment of making the decision to step out of his hotel room in Budapest and “into the unknown”:

When I got to my room in the hotel, I told myself, “Cogan, you can either hole up here and just go on the planned seminar events or you can suck it up, boy, and get out into the city and meet the people and try to get a better understanding of their lives.” I chose the latter and it has made all the difference these past forty-five years. (p. 103)

Both Merryfield and Wilson served as Peace Corps volunteer teachers in Africa. Merryfield (2018) recalled how the experience in Sierra Leone altered her former perspective: “Within days of being in country I realized that just about everything I had learned about Africa in my master’s degree and my own reading was either outdated or useless in living and working in Sierra Leone” (p. 124). For Wilson (2018), Peace Corps played a central role and had continuous influence in the development of her global educator identity: “Peace Corps and Africa, especially Liberia, do represent the beginning, middle, and end of [her] career and life” (p. 320). She described her teaching in Liberia as a “double cross-cultural experience” (p. 297). In her work she interacted with Afro-American missionaries and Liberians, many of whom were descendants of freed slaves from the United States, she learned about the complexed historical and cultural connections between Liberian and American societies. Working in Liberia helped her gain a new perspective on the world and her home country. It also introduced her to more career opportunities and meaningful social relations later in her life.

Kirkwood-Tucker and Tlou were born outside the United States, and they spent their childhood years in Nazi Germany and British-occupied Rhodesia, respectively. As young adults, however, they both decided to migrate to the United States, where they established themselves as global scholars. Both scholars expressed their gratefulness for this major shift in life. Tlou (2018) described in his autobiography how the opportunity to study in the United States helped him escape the chaos in South Rhodesia, when the colonial regime declared independence and life “became a nightmare for both Europeans and Africans” (p. 221). Initially, he experienced difficulties as a new immigrant separated from his family, but eventually they were reunited. The family was able to overcome the obstacles, for which Tlou was thankful to his wife “for keeping the family together in a strange land, a strange culture, and a strange environment” (p. 223). Although pained by the memory of her crying parents when she left Germany for the United States, Kirkwood-Tucker (2018b) did not regret her decision to migrate. Looking back at the influence of that decision, she wrote: “My arrival in the United States heralded in a profound epoch in my young life during which time I greatly broadened my Western perspective of the world” (p. 150).

The move across geographical and sociocultural space may also refer to a resettling in a place, usually due to work, and living there for a significant amount of time. Not a single scholar in this book spent their life predominantly in one city or one state. The willingness to move is often associated with their open-mindedness, an adventurous spirit, and a strong desire to learn. For instance, Wilson (2018) recalled her eight moves in 11 years. “In almost all those moves,” she said, “I was lucky to find ways to continue to learn and teach” (p. 299). Another example is Jan Tucker’s decision to leave Stanford where he got his first academic post, knowing he could have stayed “at one of the world’s eminent educational institutions.” Instead, he chose to join Florida International University in the hope of becoming “part of something new and great, creating it from the ground up” (Cruz, 2018, p. 42).

## **Discussion**

In this section, we discuss the significance and implications of our findings in relation to our study's purpose and existing literature. Based on the findings thematized above, we discuss the connections between experiences and the development of global mindedness. We also examine the qualities of global mindedness emerging from our findings. Finally, we critically assess our study's limitations on illustrating the phenomenon of becoming globally minded.

In the findings, we have listed the four common patterns of significant experiences. How do these experiences catalyze (the development of) global mindedness? The first point to acknowledge is that these global scholars drew upon their internally developed, familial and community resources. A (trans)formative experience may emerge from a sociocultural condition such as growing up as White middle-class American in a context of overt racism, or African in a British colony (see the examples of Merryfield and Tlou mentioned earlier). It may also be shaped by historical events such as World War II or the Cold War, as well as policies such as the GI Bill for returning veterans that enabled Jim Becker to pursue a higher education, and the creation of Peace Corps that allowed Wilson and Merryfield to teach in Africa. However, we argue that experiencing these conditions or incidents is not sufficient in producing global mindedness. Considering the diversity of experiences from the narratives, no evidence could show a certain location, background, or event *on its own* that would contribute to the development of global mindedness without the learner's active role—often supported by mentors—in choosing, interpreting, and often critically reflecting on their experiences. Driven by curiosity and the desire to learn about the culturally different *Other*, many scholars chose to leave home and to seek an international experience. Critical thinking and reflexivity enabled them to deepen their understandings of social injustice and to question the premises of war and conflict. Their learner dispositions such as curiosity and self-reflection can be traced to the supportive environments and empowering relationships these scholars experienced during their formative years. In their narratives, many scholars recalled significant mentors and role models from childhood and school years. Moreover, capabilities and mentalities such as cooperation and networking, which contributed to their career success, can also be traced to formative experiences. Examples from the book may include Becker's and Cogan's working on the farm, Tucker's participation in team sports, or Wilson's volunteering at a settlement house camp. As noted in Findings, many scholars grew up in a supportive and empowering environment, and they had mentors and spouses that supported both their personal growth and career development. Higher education and a scholarly career also provided them with the time and resources to develop the sensitivity and criticality they demonstrate in narrating their experiences. None of the scholars mentioned being neglected by parents or suffering from abusive personal relations.

Further, the experiences highlighted in our findings were largely organic, *lived*, and well-integrated into processes of identity formation, rather than artificial, taught, or induced externally as part of a fixed curriculum or predesigned pedagogy. Our findings suggest that global mindedness was more likely a product of daily experiences and reflection rather than an ideology imposed through any top-down political agenda. Even when learning did become political, these scholars would learn through lived experience in a social context, such as witnessing racist practices and being exposed to the atmosphere of civil rights or anti-war movements. They might have intentionally chosen to accept and apply a certain ideology in their work and teaching philosophy, such as *ubuntu* philosophy in training the trainer (Tlou, 2018), progressive pedagogy (Tye, 2018), or postcolonial pedagogy (Merryfield, 2018). These choices were made based on their experiences and reflections.

On the other hand, many of the ideologies opposing to global mindedness, including nationalist, racial discourse, and political propaganda became objects of critical reflection, and eventually discarded. Examples include the war and nationalist propaganda in Becker's story (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2018a), racial hierarchy imposed through a colonial curriculum in Tlou's (2018) story, the fascist leader worship enforced on schoolchildren of Nazi Germany (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2018b), the Cold War competition mentality linked to the Sputnik effect (Grossman, 2018), and the Eurocentric bias in American high school curriculum (Merryfield, 2018). Of course, the criticality of these scholars is also limited by their historical context. There are likely normative discourses in play that are not made explicit in the presented narratives, such as U.S. exceptionalism, North-South relations of dependency, and liberal benevolence (Bishai, 2004; Dyrness, 2021), which would require further examination.

From these findings we conclude that for the global scholars in our study, their global mindedness grew organically from and through their lived experience. The resultant reflexivity offered them conceptual tools to critically reflect on and to identify ideological influences in educational practice. Practitioners in global education, such as those who design study abroad programs, may need to pay attention to students' learned dispositions as resources and baggage that they bring with them to their international experiences. The assumption that students will automatically become globally minded citizens through a prescribed and predesigned trip abroad is indeed problematic (Tarc, 2013).

Regarding the potential value of an international experience, theme four confirms this value of having an international experience: that travel, study, and stay overseas can contribute to the development of global mindedness. However, this theme also challenges assumptions from the "immersion discourse," according to which certain experiences labelled as *immersive* are intrinsically more educative and transformative (Doerr, 2013, 2019). In practice, immersion often translates into a "how to" list of experience hunting including "home stay or living as the locals" (Doerr, 2013, p. 231). In Cogan's example, he stayed in the hotel in Budapest, a typical tourist, rather than immersive experience. However, he still named his decision to step out of his hotel room as a "life-altering" moment. While not denying the value of *immersion*, our findings do suggest reconsidering immersion beyond this popular notion. It can include stepping out of a hotel during a conference trip, as in Cogan's case above. It may also happen in the form of a new immigrant finding oneself in "a strange land" (Tlou, 2018, p. 223).

Moreover, as the other three themes suggest, experiences significant to the development of global mindedness also happen "at home." They may happen in the form of a seemingly random, but critical incident, such as Merryfield's conversation with a guest speaker from Nigeria. They may also occur in everyday situations and at various stages of life. Tye's childhood in a culturally diverse and dynamic community, Wilson's summer job with a German counsellor who experienced the war, and Charlotte Anderson's teaching experience in a school where the student population was predominantly African American are just a few examples. No evidence from the narratives could show any single quality of an experience, such as its duration, life situation, or geographical location of occurrence, was most valuable across all narratives, as its value may depend on the learner's life history, positionality, and capacity to actively engage in critical reflection.

The unique, life-long journeys of these scholars have led them to the common venture of promoting and supporting global education. These journeys and their advocacy for global education also shed light on the phenomenon/notion of global mindedness. For Becker (Kirkwood-Tucker, 2018a), the ultimate vision was founded on promoting peace and preventing war and

human suffering. For Merryfield (2018), her work in global education was motivated by equity and social justice. For Wilson (2018), her goal, as the title of her autobiography indicates, was more epistemically to bring “the world” (knowledge of the wider world) back home to American learners. Binding these goals is a type of idealism—holding on firmly to their ideals and working steadily to achieve them against the everyday constraints and obstacles shaped by larger conditions. A common feature of their shared idealism is its “grounded-ness,” which has three folds of meanings here. First, their idealism is grounded in lived personal experiences. Second, it is grounded in the broader social and political contexts. Third, it is grounded in their teaching practice, research projects and publications as global education scholars. Accordingly, they also represent a loosely bound social and professional network, which provided support to each other’s work but also limits the qualities and features of global mindedness they embody/represent.

### ***Limitations***

We acknowledge the limitations of our chosen methodology for this study. For example, due to the lack to details presented in the narratives, we are unable to fully understand why Jan Tucker compared his entire course of growing up to the movie “Hoosiers” (Cruz, 2018), or what happened during Ken Tye’s stay in rural Liberia that made him particularly “interested in schooling in newly independent African nations” (Tye, 2018, p. 204). Also, we need to be cautious as these retrospective accounts could misrepresent the actual experiences of the scholars. Due to the limited scope of the study, we did not use other sources of data to triangulate these experiential accounts. The stories told in the book are more reflective of the act of (iterative) storytelling than reaching back to the actual feelings and thoughts of the individual undergoing the experience. Perhaps such temporally layered, and narrative-mediated memory/identity work is ubiquitous? As storied beings (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990), we narrate our lives from memories of events but also memories of past stories told to or by us. The point is to highlight that we have examined and analyzed a set of *constructed* stories or accounts of the significant experiences in the journey to become globally minded. Of course, interviewing participants directly to produce *primary* data does not get us out of this predicament. Future studies may consider combining the use of documented narrative with other modalities, as including interviews and other secondary texts.

As noted earlier, the book chapters as sources of data include only narratives of *U.S.-based* scholars. Inevitably, their perspectives are limited mainly to the geographical and political context of the United States. Although Kirkwood-Tucker and Tlou were born, and arguably had their formative education outside of the United States, their work in the field of global education took place after they moved to the United States. The majority of the scholars included in this study are White and of European descent. Even though they witnessed racism, they did not have the personal experience of being a racialized minority under conditions of White privilege/supremacy. Their positionality, therefore, can not only limit their awareness of racism, but also makes them benefactors of this unequal racial system. The *GI Bill*, for instance, provided Jim Becker the special benefit as a (White) veteran to resume formal education, but as Turner and Bound (2003) reported, it also exacerbated racial inequality between and White and Black veterans. Both Merryfield and Wilson spoke highly of Peace Corps in their narratives, but neither problematized its colonial complicities in their narratives. Amin (1999), while endorsing the noble course to which Peace Corps was dedicated, also noted the skepticism many African Americans had towards the organization. Social economic/class status also seems to be an important factor in the development of global mindedness. Though coming from a variety of communities, localities, and backgrounds, none of the scholars mentioned experiences of living in poverty.



## Conclusion

In this study, we used a thematic analysis approach to investigate the narratives of 13 U.S.-based education scholars. We analyzed the significant, life-long and life-wide experiences of becoming globally minded. We identified and explicated upon four common themes of these experiences across multiple narratives and noted unique features in each scholar's experiences. Methodologically, we have demonstrated through this study how documented narratives such as (auto)biographies may be useful as data source in global education research. We have also discussed some of the limitations researchers may face when adopting such a biography-based approach with documented narratives as the single source of data.

To conclude, we highlight one significant implication of our findings to inform research on, and preparation for pedagogical interventions in global education, such as (short-term) study abroad. While there are obviously limits of short-term experience and its study, our findings and discussion suggest that it may be worth suturing students' reflections on their experience and learning, as well as researchers' analyses on students' accounting, within the longer arc of students' formative and transformative experience. For example, it may be generative to not only *look forward* in anticipating the potential multicultural encounters, challenges, and learning with prospective sojourners, but to excavate the life histories that study abroad participants bring with them to the study abroad experience (Tarc, 2013).

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