



14

Globalization and Social Change

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 14 focuses on a recurring theme throughout this textbook: globalization. The author begins with a brief discussion about how globalization promotes social changes through convergence and divergence.

For sociologists, the study of the globalizing processes of the world is informed by three broad perspectives. The world system perspective emerged out of the 1970s and argued that the only way once could understand and study global economic development was through the capitalist world system. The capitalist world system broke down into three categories: core, semi-periphery, and periphery. The world society perspective sought to understand why states and other organizations, despite a wide and varying history, resemble each other so closely in many of their major aspects such as policies and structures. For globalization studies, an emphasis is placed on institutions and their increasing similarity on the global scale. The third perspective is the space/time perspective. Whereas the two former perspectives were relatively unified, the range of views in this perspective has several views on the world and its increasing connectedness through globalization across space and time. Rather than placing focus on purely economic or institutional processes, this view examines how the social and cultural shifts impact globalization.

After the discussion of these three perspectives, the chapter discusses three global flows. The first of these flows is the global flow of capital, goods, and services. This economic flow of globalization has been propelled to higher rates due, in large part, to neo-liberalism. This economic model is based on the belief that the state should interfere as little as possible in the market economy. In other words, free trade, privatization of industries, and deregulation are the main ways to foster economic

growth. However for social scientists, these measures are problematic in large part due to their exploitative nature of the poor and lower class.

The second global flow is that of transportation and information technologies. Technological advances mean that goods can be moved from one part of the globe to another within hours or days. The use of the Internet has also contributed to the modern digital society.

The third flow in globalization is people. With the aforementioned developments in transportation, most notably the airplane, people can move about the planet at an increased pace. This has contributed to tourism, immigration, and in some cases, refuge for those escaping violence and turmoil in their homeland.

KEY TERMS

Contagion
Core

Glocalization
Institutional isomorphism

Periphery
Semi-periphery

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is glocalization? (p. 329)
2. What are the three types of flows in globalization? (p. 323)
3. Within the globalization process, what are the differences between convergence and divergence? (p. 322)
4. What are the three categories into which states in the capitalist world system break down? (p. 323)
5. What has been Canada's response to the Syrian refugee crisis? (p. 338)
6. What is the digital divide? (p. 336)
7. What are the current global migration trends? (pp. 337–338)
8. Why has international migration been increasing since the 1960s? (p. 337)
9. What are some of the root causes of the Syrian refugee crisis? (p. 338)
10. Why does the neo-liberal market model promote free trade? (p. 332)

READINGS AND WEBSITES

Iyall Smith, Keri. (2013). *Sociology of globalization: Cultures, economies, and politics*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

This book contains numerous well known sociologists studying the topic of globalization. They include Niels Petersson, Anthony Giddens, George Ritzer, and Roland Robertson. The materials

covered by this book are rich in both breadth and depth. The first part of the book looks at how cultures are impacted by globalization. Next, the economy in an increasingly global and connected world is examined. Finally, politics in the globalizing era is looked at, such as human rights, crime, and democracy.

Martell, Luke. (2010). *The sociology of globalization*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Martell's book has numerous aspects that coincide very well with this chapter. He begins with the divergence–convergence debate. Next, he looks at the history of globalization along with the technology, economy, and culture in the globalizing era. Martell then addresses the issue of increasing inequality by way of migration and capitalism. Lastly, he examines possible solutions and movements to combat this rise of inequalities and global corporate hegemony in the world.

The World Economic Forum. (2017). Retrieved from <https://www.weforum.org/>

This site outlines the aims, programs, and structures of the world economic forum.

The United Nations Refugee Agency (2017). *Syrian Emergency*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/syria-emergency.html>

Over 5 million people have fled Syria since 2011, seeking safety in Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and beyond. Millions more are displaced inside Syria and, as war continues, hope is fading fast. UNHCR works hard to help, leading a coordinated effort across the region. Together with our partners, NGOs, and host governments, we offer a lifeline to those in need.

Gaines, Richard. (2012, Mar 6). “Conflict Minerals 101.” *The Enough Project*. Retrieved from <http://enoughproject.org/blog/conflict-minerals-101>

One of the main entry points the Enough Project's Raise Hope for Congo campaign utilizes to raise public awareness about the war in eastern Congo is our personal connection to the conflict as consumers. Through electronic devices, we are all linked to the widespread atrocities that have made Congo's conflict the deadliest since World War II.