



# Globalization and Families: The Family Policy Challenge

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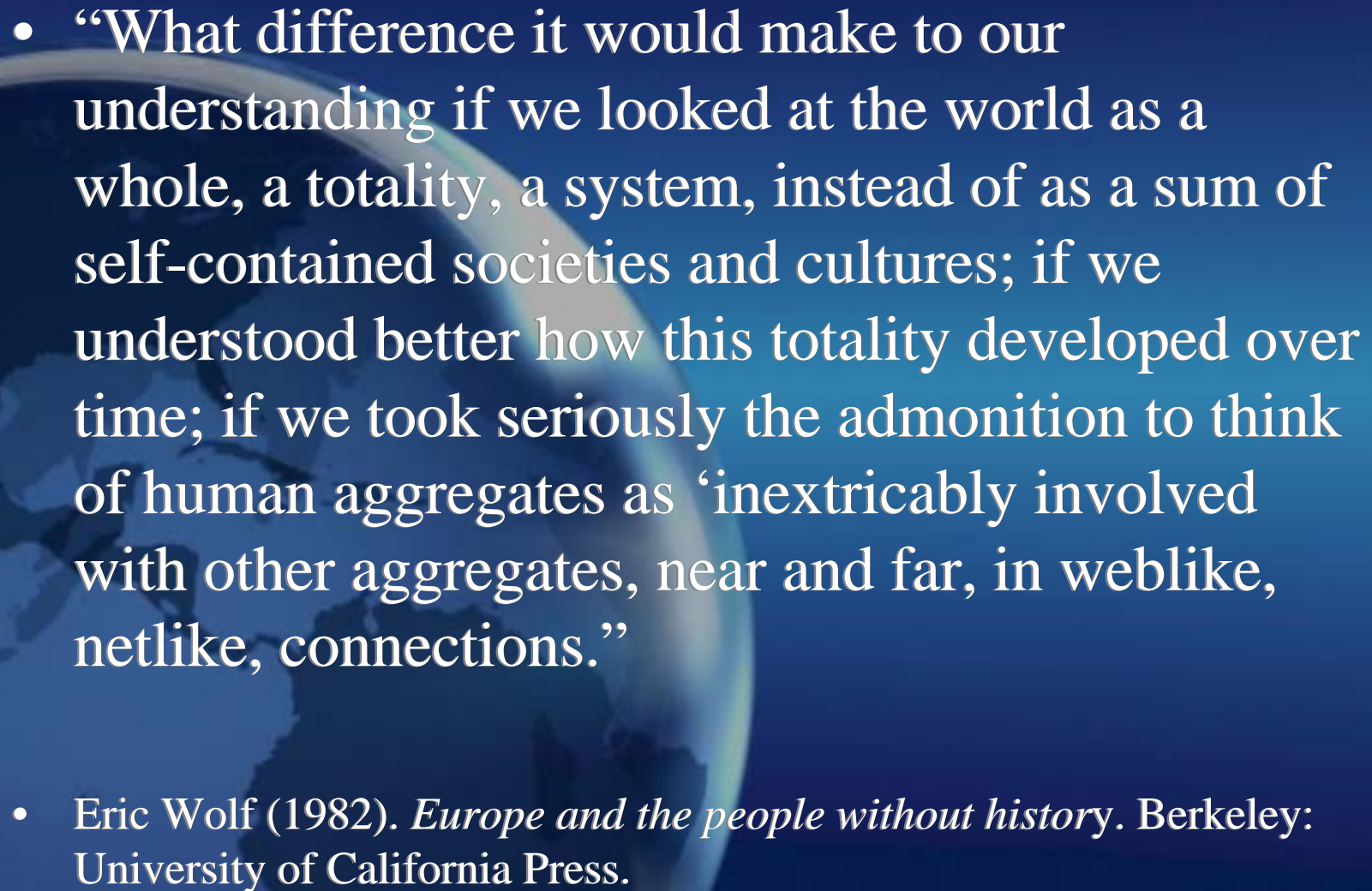
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# Overview

- The debates on globalization and families
- Linking globalization, families and family policies
- Demographic trends
- Work, family, gender issues
- Children and children's rights
- Future directions

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- “What difference it would make to our understanding if we looked at the world as a whole, a totality, a system, instead of as a sum of self-contained societies and cultures; if we understood better how this totality developed over time; if we took seriously the admonition to think of human aggregates as ‘inextricably involved with other aggregates, near and far, in weblike, netlike, connections.’”
  - Eric Wolf (1982). *Europe and the people without history*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

# Globalization

- Directly & indirectly affects family life through the strategies and programs created by economic and social policies
- Affects:
  - Poverty
  - Work-family issues
  - Social exclusion of certain groups

# Defining Globalization:

- Focus on economics, free markets and changing role of nation states
- Increasingly interdependent global economy
- Importance of transnational corporations
- Advances in communication and information technologies

# The Debates Around Globalization



- 2 polar views:
  - Instrument of progress:
    - Wealth creation
    - Expanded opportunities / education - training
    - Nurturing environment for entrepreneurship and enterprise
  - Instrument of inequality
    - Unemployment
    - Poverty – greater inequalities due to sharply diverging experiences at the individual level
    - Marginalization





# Serious Omissions:

- An economic focus leads to
  - Effects on families lost
  - Effects on communities lost
  - Social and cultural responses marginalized
  - Vulnerable groups (elderly, disabled affected)
  - Lifelong disadvantages

# Defining Families

- No formal consensus on definition
  - Some form of family or kinship relationships characterize all societies
  - Primary site for:
    - Reproduction
    - Socializing the next generation
    - Early education
    - Stabilizing adult personalities



# Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century

- Traditional breadwinner / homemaker family no longer normative for children
  - Dual-earner couples
  - Single parenthood
  - Cohabitation
  - Same sex couples
  - Remarried couples

# Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century

- Developing world
  - Upsurge of women in paid labor force
  - Dual-earner households
  - Aging of populations



# Linking Globalization & Families through Family Policies

- Role of nation-state transformed
- Role of family to protect its members transformed

# Contemporary Family Policy

- Needs to take into account these changed conditions
- Nation-states losing its role as the purveyor of social safety net
- New types of collaborations appearing

# Cultural Diversity and Nation-States

- Formulating family policies is also problematic because:
  - Great cultural heterogeneity within same society
    - Rural / urban / social class / religion
    - Literacy
    - Age at marriage
    - Opportunities for acquisition of skills



# Demographic Trends






# Demographics of a Changing World

- Projection by 2025
  - Five out of six people will live in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East
  - One in six persons will live in industrialized nations, including Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Russia, and Japan (United Nations, 2008)

# Demographic Trends: Fertility Rates

- Lowered fertility rates with the exception of sub-Saharan Africa
  - Europe: 1.5
  - USA: 2.1
  - Sub-Saharan Africa: (5.1) (WB statistics)
- Explanations:
  - Later marriage age: Sweden m/35/ f/32
  - Women in labor force
  - Postpone childbearing / lower fecundity
- Lower fertility rates = redistribution of power



# Demographic Trends: Aging

- 2050: More elderly than children
- Primary aging is in developing world (59% of elderly today):
  - China currently has 12 million people over the age of 80
  - 2050 China will have 99 million people over the age of 80

# Transnational Families

- Economic disparities = migration within and between countries
  - Refugee flows
  - Transnational corporations
  - Growth of service sector
- Retain roots in home country
- Create new roots in host country

# Transnational Families

- “New” global migration:
  - Females
  - 49.6%
  - Children remain in home country
  - “Transnational mothering”
  - Women criticized at home and abroad
  - Social policies restrict family migration



# Gender, Work, and Family



# The Feminization of the Labor Force

- Preference for female laborers
  - Low wage production for export
  - Labor intensive manufacturing
- In U.S. and globally - women heavily represented in:
  - Clothing / tourism / service / electronics components / data entry / financial services call centers / flower farms and orchids

# Gender, Work-Family Issues

- 2010:
  - US. 59.2% women in paid labor force including 71.6% of women with young children
  - Europe – 53%
  - Sub-Saharan Africa – 62%
  - Caribbean – 48%
  - South Asia – 36%
  - North Africa – 29%
  - East Asia – 69%

# Consequences of Women's Incorporation into Labor Force

- Controversies around division of labor in domestic realm becoming global issue
- Extreme differences within same society and between West and developing countries
- Issue of care work neglected

# Feminization of Global Labor Force

- Care work: children AND elderly and disabled
- Globalization has intensified the market for household and care work to be serviced out
- One response has been increased migration of women from developing world to industrialized world
- Re-definition of manhood and male roles as men lose jobs and/or earn less; forced to participate in domestic realm



# Globalization and Children

# Children and Childhood



- Children under the age of 18 make up nearly 48 percent of the population in the world's least developed countries
- Children under the age of 18 make up nearly 21 percent in the world's industrialized nations



# Globalization and Children



- Does not mesh with experiences of children in many parts of the world
  - Raises complex questions about their lives and rights
- Identity formation changing:
  - New representations
  - Commodification

# The Disputes Around Child Labor

- Western version of rights and labor laws spreading
- Child labor – estimates around 352 million children between 5- 17
- Defining child labor?



# The Disputes Around Child Labor

- Critics:
  - Child labor debates need to shift from calculating hours of activity in the labor market to recognition of the type of work activities that children are engaged in
  - Opportunities diverge for male and female children depending on social location



# Topics for Discussion

# Linking Globalization and Families

- Supporting families in a globalizing context can be achieved **in part** by:
  - Re-examining social and economic policies
  - Educational curricula that stress health, rights, gender equality, advocacy, self-empowerment
  - Nation-state partnerships with transnational and local NGO's and evaluation of these systems



Thank You!