

Globalization and the Geography of Networks

Field Note Marching On



Figure 14.1
Porto Alegre, Brazil. Marchers at the World Social Forum work to reshape their worlds.
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"You cannot come to southern Brazil without seeing our biggest city," said the vintner who was showing me around the Cooperativa Aurora, the huge winery in Bento Gonçalves, in the State of Rio Grande do Sul. "Besides, it's January, so they'll be having the big marches, it's almost like carnival time in Rio!"

So I headed for Porto Alegre, only to find that a hotel room was not to be had. Tens of thousands of demonstrators had converged on the State's capital, largest port, and leading industrial city—and what united them was opposition to globalization (Fig. 14.1 and on the cover).

The World Social Forum has become an annual event in Porto Alegre, with ever-larger marches and meetings to protest the actions of the world's dominant

states, especially the United States. The World Social Forum is a network of anti-globalizationists—people who seek an alternative economic reality for the globe, one not centered on accumulation of capital. Socialist economic views, leftist political leanings, and support for minority causes combined in a show of strength that coincided with the World Economic Forum meeting of rich and powerful countries held in Europe. It was not quite a carnival, but the banners held aloft by the noisy, sometimes singing and dancing demonstrators left no doubt as to their common goals. As a close look at this scene suggests, there was support for the Palestinian Intifada, for South African trade unions, for Brazilian labor organizations, and for Bolivian workers among many other causes. But the overriding purpose was to reject globalization in all its forms, to demand an end to the economic penetration of rich countries into the lives and livelihoods of the poor, and to warn poor-country governments not to cooperate with or help implement the goals of the rich.

The World Social Forum describes the Porto Alegre assembly as "an open meeting place where social movements, networks, NGOs and other civil society organizations opposed to neo-liberalism and a world dominated by capital or by any form of imperialism come together to pursue their thinking, to debate ideas democratically, to formulate proposals, share their experiences freely and network for effective action," according to the official website.

The groups that created the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre see their meeting as a response to the annual World Economic Forum held in Davos, Switzerland. At Davos, a luxury ski resort, participants in the World Economic Forum typically champion free trade and focus on improving the "state of the world by engaging leaders in partnerships to shape global, regional and industry agendas," according to the official website. Participants in the World Economic Forum represent the 1000 largest corporations globally and 200 smaller companies (often drawing from the periphery or semi-periphery) and include elite businesspeople, politicians, journalists, and other global decision makers. Issues on the agenda at Davos (such as global warming, education, global health, development) speak to many of the concerns expressed at Porto Alegre, but the issues are typically framed in different philosophies at the two meetings. Speakers at the World Economic Forum include government leaders, business leaders, and famous international activists, such as Bono.

The World Social Forum purposely holds its meeting at the same time the World Economic Forum holds its meeting in Davos. The goal of the World Social Forum is to find alternatives to the decisions being made at the World Economic Forum. The World Social Forum describes the Davos meeting as the place "where the theory of world domination by capital, within the parameters of neo-liberalism, is constructed and steadily put into practice."

Some have tried to bridge the gap between Davos and Porto Alegre. In 2003, Brazil's president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva spoke to both the Davos meeting and the Porto Alegre meeting, receiving warm receptions in both places. *The Economist* described Lula's agenda as seeking "to achieve progressive ends largely with means that Davos would endorse." One example of the Lula agenda is to move more of Brazil's labor from the informal economy into the formal economy, resulting in more tax revenue paid by a greater number of employees in the taxable, formal sector of the economy.

Both the World Social Forum and the World Economic Forum hope to shape globalization. In Chapter 1, we defined **globalization** as a set of processes that are increasing interactions, deepening relationships, and heightening interdependence

without regard to country borders. We explained that globalization is also a set of outcomes that are felt from these global processes—outcomes that are unevenly distributed and differently manifested across the world.

In the media and in debates on campus, the topic of globalization is often too quickly reduced to black and white—either you are for it or you are against it. Globalization is possible because of increasing interdependence throughout the globe, where communications across people and places are relatively easy and inexpensive. Increasing interdependence has hastened the development of science and technology, has pried open long-closed political systems, and has broadened the horizons of people in distant places. Interdependence has also highlighted the extraordinary gaps between rich and poor. It has led to greater levels of resource consumption, heightened some intercultural animosities, and devalued and eroded traditional modes of livelihood.

In this chapter, we neither espouse nor oppose globalization. Rather, we focus on the geography of globalization and the outcomes of globalization across scales. We describe how people and places are interconnected and the kinds of networks they have built both because of and in spite of globalization. Finally, we examine changing identities, looking at how people make sense of themselves in a globalized world.

Key Questions For Chapter 14

1. What is globalization, and what role do networks play in globalization?
2. At what scales do networks operate in the globalized world?
3. How have identities changed in a globalized world?

WHAT IS GLOBALIZATION, AND WHAT ROLE DO NETWORKS PLAY IN GLOBALIZATION?

Whether you are in favor of or opposed to globalization, we all must recognize that globalization is *not* a natural evolution in humanity. Globalization is “neither an inevitable nor an irreversible set of processes,” according to John O’Loughlin, Lynn Staeheli, and Edward Greenberg. Andrew Kirby explains that globalization is “not proceeding according to any particular playbook. It is not a smoothly evolving state of capitalist development.” Rather, it is fragmented, and its flows are “chaotic in terms of origins and destinations.”

Globalization is a “chaotic” set of processes and outcomes created by people, be they corporate CEOs, university administrators, readers of weblogs, or protestors at a trade meeting. The processes of globalization and the connectedness created through globalization are not limited to state-to-state interaction. Rather, the connected-

ness of globalization occurs across scales and across networks, regardless of state borders.

The backbone of globalization is trade; thus, debates over globalization typically focus on trade. The argument in favor of globalization, as economist Keith Maskus states, is that “free trade raises the well-being of all countries by inducing them to specialize their resources in those goods they produce relatively most efficiently” in order to lower production costs and that “competition through trade raises a country’s long-term growth rate by expanding access to global technologies and promoting innovation.”

These fundamental principles of free trade (and how to achieve it) are often described as the **Washington Consensus**. Antiglobalizationists see the Washington Consensus as a Western push for the rest of the world to

privatize state-owned entities, to open financial markets, to liberalize trade by removing restrictions on the flow of goods, and to encourage foreign direct investment. Antiglobalizationists focus on the role of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and World Trade Organization as purveyors of the Washington Consensus, often gathering at the meetings of these major global organizations because they see the organizations as set up to benefit the countries of the global economic core. Antiglobalizationists argue that the countries of the core continue to protect their own economies while forcing the countries of the semi-periphery and periphery to open their economies to foreign direct investment and remove protections on their domestic production. According to Maskus, the rules negotiated for the World Trade Organization “inevitably reflect the economic interest of powerful lobbyists” in states such as the United States and the European Union. Antiglobalizationists agree with Maskus and argue that free trade is not “free” rather, it builds up a global economic network that sends most benefits to the core.

With globalization, we are living on an unprecedented scale. As Andrew Kirby perceptively describes it, we are living “not so much in a world without boundaries, or in a world without geography—but *more literally in a world*, as opposed to a neighborhood or a region” (emphasis added). What does it mean to live “in a world?”

Networks

Manuel Castells defines **networks** as “a set of interconnected nodes” without a center. The idyllic network is horizontally structured, with power shared among all participants and ideas flowing in all directions. The multitude of networks that exist in the world—financial, transportation, communication, kinship, corporate, non-governmental, trade, government, media, education, and dozens of others—enable globalization to occur and create a higher degree of interaction and interdependence among people than ever before in human history.

While networks have always existed, Castells says that they have fundamentally changed over the last 20 years as a result of the diffusion of information technology that links places in a global, yet uneven, way. Through information technology networks, Castells argues that globalization has proceeded by “linking up all that, according to dominant interests, has value anywhere in the planet, and discarding anything (people, firms, territories, resources) which has no value or becomes devalued.” Information technology networks link some places more than others, helping to create the spatial unevenness of globalization as well as the uneven outcomes of globalization.

Time-Space Compression

Access (or lack of access) to information technology networks creates time-space compression (Chapters 1 and 4). Time-space compression means that certain places, such as global cities (especially in the core), are more interconnected than ever through communication and transportation networks, and other places, such as the periphery, are farther removed than ever. According to Castells, the age of information technology networks has been more revolutionary than even the advent of printing press or the Industrial Revolution. He claims we are just at the beginning of this age “as the Internet becomes a universal tool of interactive communication, as we shift from computer-centered technologies to network-diffused technologies, as we make progress in nanotechnology (and thus in the diffusion capacity of information devices), and even more important, as we unleash the biology revolution, making possible for the first time, the design and manipulation of living organisms, including human parts.”

A major divide in access to information technology between the core and periphery is both a hallmark of the current world and an example of the uneven outcomes of globalization. The United Nations Development Program’s Human Development Report in 2004 divides the world’s states into high income, middle income, and low income (according to gross domestic product) and reports on accessibility to technology according to these classes. In 2002, the United Nations reported that on average high-income states had 507 telephone mainlines, 582 cellular subscribers, and 382.6 Internet users per 1000 people. On average, middle-income states had 111 telephone mainlines, 104 cellular subscribers, and 37.2 Internet users per 1000 people. The states in the low-income class, according to UN statistics, had an average of 11 telephone mainlines, 15 cellular subscriptions, and 5.9 Internet users per 1000 people.

The quickening pace of change in technology is another hallmark of the globalized world and magnifies the global technological divide. We may be shocked to see how quickly technology has changed and diffused. In 1992, the highest income states had on average only 10 cellular subscribers and 2.5 Internet users per 1000 people (contrasted with 582 and 382.6, respectively, in 2002).

Global Cities

Time-space compression has helped both to create and reinforce a network of highly linked global cities. In Chapter 9, we discussed the growth of *global cities* in the core, semi-periphery, and periphery of the globe and the growth in their connectedness. We considered much of the research published by geographers in the Globalization and World Cities group based in the United Kingdom. The group of researchers who contribute to the Globalization and World Cities group use

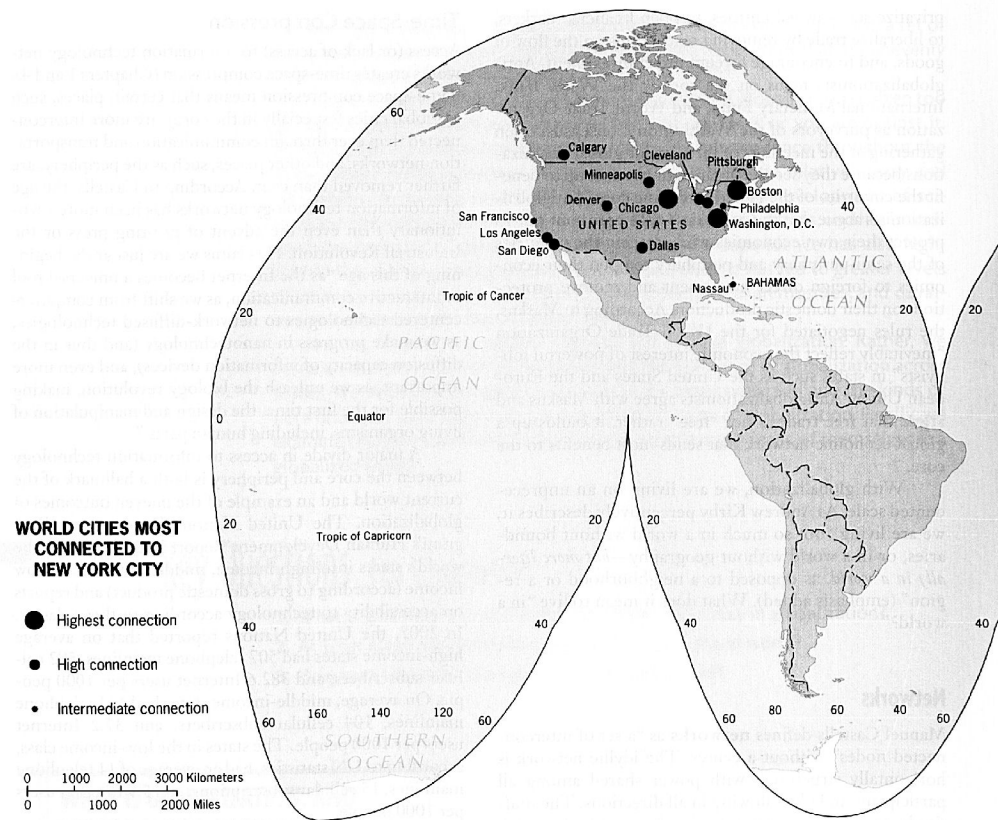


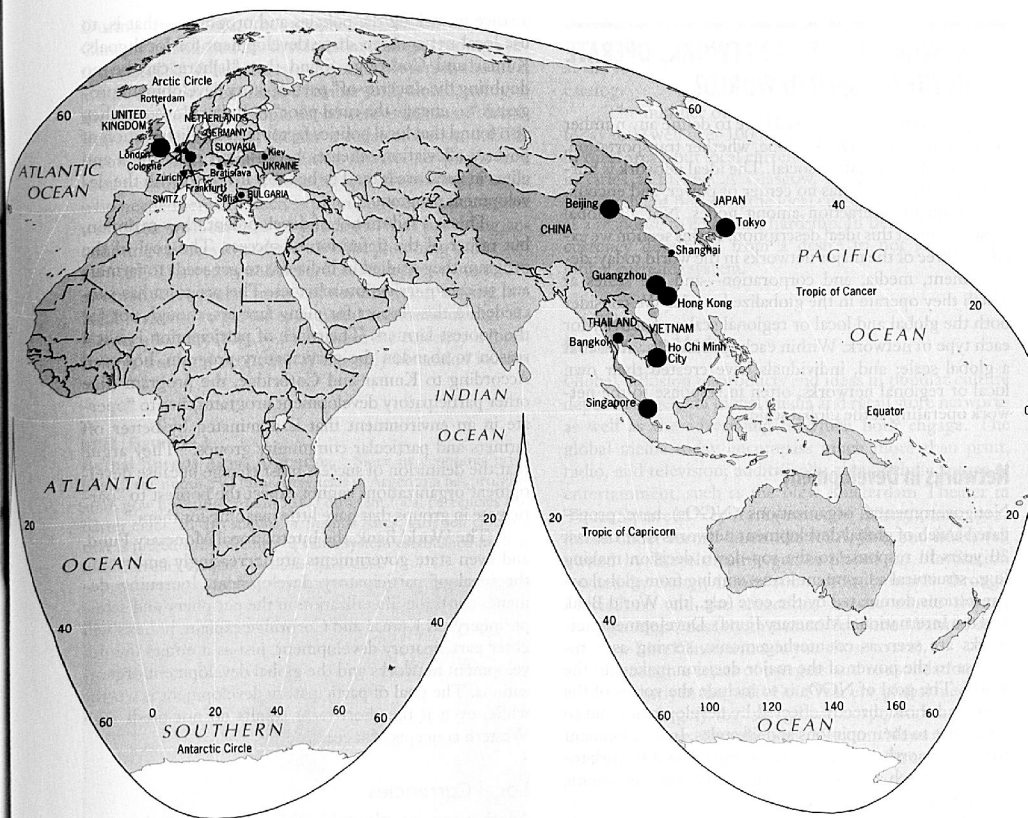
Figure 14.2

World Cities Most Connected to New York City. This map shows the 30 world cities that are the most connected to New York City, as measured by flows in the service economy. *Data from:* P. J. Taylor and R. E. Lang, "U.S. Cities in the 'World City Network,'" The Brookings Institution, Survey Series, February 2005. http://www.brookings.edu/dybdcroot/metro/pubs/20050222_worldcities.pdf, last accessed September 2005.

network analyses of global cities to examine levels of connectivity among cities for factors such as air travel between cities and global outreach of financial and advertising networks from global cities, and to generate data by individual cities rather than by countries.

The researchers generated data for 315 global cities, focusing on the interactions and connections among them. They measured the information technology flows among the cities by tracking the flow of advanced services among the cities, focusing on accounting, advertising, banking/

finance, insurance, law, and management consulting. Figure 14.2 shows the 30 cities that are most connected to New York City, as measured by the flow of advanced services. By tracking flows, the authors found that Miami, not Los Angeles, is the U.S. city most closely linked to Latin America and New York is the second most *globally* linked city in the world (behind London and ahead of Tokyo). Chicago is also a highly ranked member of the global city network, coming in seventh. The researchers found that New York and Chicago stand apart from other world cities



in that the American cities have greater domestic linkages than global cities in the Pacific Rim or the European Union.

The linkages among global cities give us an outline of the network of interactions in globalized processes. A multitude of globalized processes such as financial transactions and flows (represented here by banking/finance and accounting) occur across the network of global cities. Similarly, this network reflects the flow of advertising and marketing consultation services, which speaks to the flow of ideas through media across the globe.

THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY

Castells claims that the age of information technology is more revolutionary than either the advent of the printing press or the Industrial Revolution. Determine whether you agree with him, and write an argument in support of your position (use specific examples to support your conclusions).

AT WHAT SCALES DO NETWORKS OPERATE IN THE GLOBALIZED WORLD?

The term *network* is used here to define any number of interlinkages across the globe, whether transportation, educational, financial, or social. The ideal network is horizontally structured, has no center of power, and encourages frequent interaction among nodes. Not all global networks meet this ideal description. In this section we examine three of the major networks in the world today: development, media, and corporation—and the scales at which they operate in the globalized world. We consider both the global and local or regional scales of activity for each type of network. Within each type, nodes interact at a global scale; and, individuals have created their own local or regional networks, often in response to the network operating at the global scale.

Networks in Development

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have propagated a web of global development networks over the last 20 years in response to the top-down decision making (e.g., structural adjustment loans) coming from global organizations dominated by the core (e.g., the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund). Development networks are seen as counterhegemonic, serving as a response to the power of the major decision makers in the world. The goal of NGOs is to include the voices of the poor and those directly affected by development, and to give voice to their opinions and lifestyles. In development networks, northern NGOs and southern NGOs work together to reach a consensus on how to achieve economic development in a particular place.

Despite the goal of sharing power across a network, most development networks (like most other networks) have power differences within them. For example, Leroi Henry, Giles Mohan, and Helen Yanacopulos find that power relationships exist both within and between networks. Many networks have hierarchies of power within them, often privileging the views of the northern over the southern NGOs.

A growing number of development entities are promoting local solutions to development. **Participatory development**, the idea that locals should be engaged in deciding what development means for them and how to achieve it, is another response to top-down decision making. Stuart Corbridge has studied how the global push for participatory development has encouraged the government of India to enact participatory development programs. Corbridge and his colleague Sanjay Kumar describe the goal of participatory development as giving the people who are directly affected by policies and programs

a voice in making the policies and programs—that is, to use local networks to shape development for local goals. Kumar and Corbridge found that “[t]here can be no doubting the sincerity of” participatory development programs “to engage the rural poor” in India. However, they also found that local politics factor into the distribution of poverty alleviation schemes because richer farmers and elites in rural areas tend to be most involved with the development program.

This is a failure not of development, they maintain, but rather of the definition of success. The goal of the program they studied in India was to get seeds to farmers and to create irrigation schemes. The program has succeeded in this respect for many farmers, though not for the poorest farmers. Their lack of participation is not a reason to abandon the participatory program, however. According to Kumar and Corbridge, the program (like other participatory development programs) has to “operate in an environment that is dominated by better off farmers and particular community groups.” They argue that the definition of success must change because development organizations cannot expect the poorest to “participate in groups that have little meaning for them.”

The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and even state governments are increasingly embracing the ideal of participatory development, loosening demands for trade liberalization in the periphery and semi-periphery. As Kumar and Corbridge explain, politics will enter participatory development, just as it enters the development networks and the global development organizations. The goal of participatory development is worthwhile, even if the short-term results do not mesh with Western concepts of success.

Local Currencies

Another way people in localities, whether in the core, semi-periphery, or periphery, shape local development is by establishing local currencies. Uneven development does not affect just the periphery but also the core and semi-periphery. Economic downturns are a frequent occurrence in local places, and unemployment is a common result. As Michael Pacione explains, finding families and neighbors who can help in times of economic hardship can be quite difficult because globalization results in less connectedness:

Social trends inherent in global capitalism, including decreasing household size, increasing distance between relatives, and attenuation of neighboring relations within cities, have served to inhibit the operation of informal relations in which disadvantaged households could exchange goods and services for partial or no payment within the ‘moral’ economy of their own family or neighborhood.

During the 1980s, the people of Vancouver Island, Canada, established the first **local exchange trading system** (LETS). When the two major employers in the area, a U.S. Air Force base and a lumber mill, closed, many of the island's 50,000 people faced severe economic hardship. The community began a local currency, LETS, through which members traded services or goods in a local network separated from the formal economy. People who needed services (such as plumbing) would pay others with their own services or goods (such as providing accounting services in exchange for the plumbing call).

LETS systems and other local currency systems are alternatives to global norms of development, serving as a local response to global or regional economic change affecting a locality (Fig. 14.3). Because the currency is local, it fuels the local economy: it can only be traded locally,

Figure 14.3
Bernal Buenos Aires, Argentina. Since its economic crisis began, the number of local currencies in Argentina has proliferated, now hovering around 5,000 different local currencies and barter clubs. In this suburb of Buenos Aires, girls sell clothing that is priced with “credits,” a value system established in their local currency system. © Homer Sykes/Alamy.



thus keeping economic activity locally. The person who spends LETS for shoes, for example, can only spend them at the local shoe store, and not at an online store or in a catalog.

The number of local currencies in use in the world today total well over 1000. Many local currencies are used in rural areas, but local currencies have also found success in cities as diverse as Glasgow, Scotland and Berkeley, California. In Berkeley, the local currency did not develop as a response to economic hardship. In Berkeley, the local currency developed from a desire to not support the global currency system.

Networks in Media

Global diffusion of products and ideas in popular culture depends largely on global media and retail store networks as well as the advertising in which both engage. The global media today encompass much more than print, radio, and television; additionally, they include spaces of entertainment, such as the New Amsterdam Theater in Times Square in New York (owned by Disney), songs produced under record labels like RCA, Jive, and BMG (all owned by Bertelsmann), games played on PlayStation (owned by Sony), information about a movie through MovieFone and the directions to the movie theater through MapQuest (both owned by Time-Warner, as is the New Line Cinema movie you chose to see).

Through a series of mergers and consolidations occurring mostly in the post-Cold War era, global media are controlled largely by six global corporations: Time-Warner, Disney, Bertelsmann, Viacom, News Corporation, and Vivendi Universal. These six media corporations (along with other media corporations) are masters of **vertical integration**. A vertically integrated corporation is one that has ownership in a variety of points along the production and consumption of a commodity chain.

In a 2003 report, Miguel Mendes Pereira stated that media companies compete for three things: *content, delivery, and consumers*. Through consolidation and mergers, global media companies such as Viacom (Fig. 14.4) are vertically integrated to gain content (production companies, radio shows, television programming, films, or books) and delivery (radio, television stations, magazines, movies). Delivery of content also refers to the infrastructure of technology—the proprietary technologies used for creating and sharing digital media. Vertical integration also helps media giants attract and maintain customers through **synergy**, or the cross promotion of vertically integrated goods. For example, within the vertical integration of Viacom, you can visit a Great America Paramount Theme Park, go to the Nick Jr. House at the park, and meet characters from Blue's Clues and Dora the Explorer, head to the Karaoke stage to choose songs from VH1,

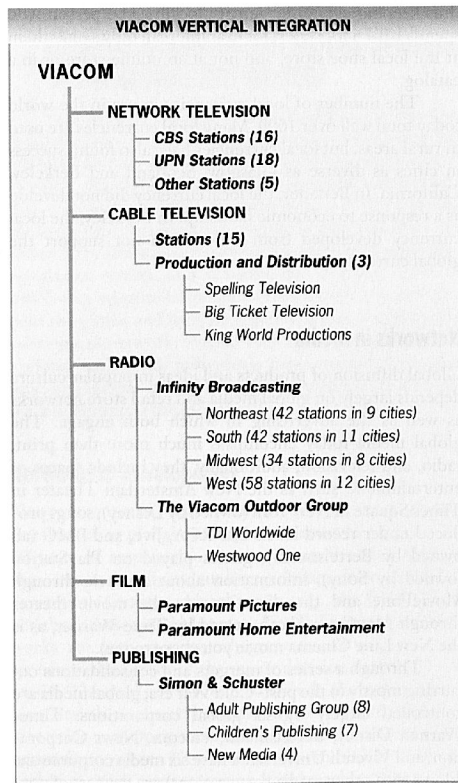


Figure 14.4
Vertical Integration in the Viacom Corporation. Data
from: Columbia Journalism Review, Who Owns What. <http://www.cjr.org/tools/owners/viacom.asp>, last accessed October 2005.

CMT, or MTV, sit down to cool off and watch the movie *School of Rock*, take a thrill ride on the *Top Gun* roller coaster, and track down Sponge Bob for a photo opportunity before leaving the park.

Vertical integration of media changes the geography of the flow of ideas globally by limiting the ultimate number of **gatekeepers**, that is, people or corporations who control access to information. A gatekeeper can choose not to tell a story and the story will not be heard. We can interpret the consolidation of media as resulting in fewer ultimate gatekeepers. In this vein, we would see the ultimate gatekeepers as the big media conglomerates. Or we can focus on the competition for customers and the proliferation of sources

of delivery for media (the vast number of cable television channels, radio stations, Internet sources, and magazines) and argue that there are more gatekeepers in the world today. In this vein, we would examine the extreme diversity in the media, where television channels are geared to specific segments (or markets) of the population. For example, both the globally reaching Al-Jazeera satellite television station and the new cable channels in the United States that are targeted for the Muslim American population are geared to specific segments of the global or American population.

Weblogs

Historically, governments and journalists had the ability to be strong gatekeepers by choosing what stories to release or tell. Today, with the extreme growth of weblogs on the Internet (upwards of 8 million in 2004), tight gatekeeping is much more difficult. A weblog is a free service provided on the Internet to post individual thoughts, photographs, and experiences, and to create links to websites or other weblogs. Weblogs are in many ways an individual way of creating local, regional, or global networks that respond to (and exist separate from) the global network of media.

Anyone with access to the Internet can read a blogger's postings and comment on them. Blogger, the original weblog site created by the small company Pyra Labs in 1999, was sold to Google. The media giants are finding their way into the blogosphere (as the blog space of the Internet is called) with sites such as MSN spaces and AOL journals. The weblog site hosts your weblog for free and provides a format for your weblog, so that you need know nothing about website publishing. Weblogs influenced the U.S. elections in 2004. They also help with cross-promotion by linking other websites, and they spur stories in the mainstream media.

Networks of Retail Corporations

Unlike major media corporations that are vertically integrated, major retail corporations are typically horizontally integrated. A horizontally integrated corporation is one that at first glance appears to be different retail companies in pursuit of different market shares, however all of the retail companies are owned by the same parent corporation.

Horizontal integration means that when you shop for similar products across places or across a mall, your dollars will often support the same parent corporation. Suppose you were engaged to be married in 2005 and you registered your desired gifts with your local Lord & Taylor department store in Texas. Soon after, you found that friends and family from all over the country could easily shop for your china at Marshall Field's locations and even at Macy's stores. Why? Marshall Field's was acquired in 2004

by Lord & Taylor's parent company, May Company, and in 2005, May Company was acquired by Federated, which is the parent company of Macy's (and also Bloomingdale's). If not already, all of these acquisitions will soon be apparent at your local mall, as Federated puts the Macy's name on over 300 former regional May Company stores in 2006 (such as Hecht's, Strawbridges and Marshall Field's) and as Federated divests in 68 stores in 66 malls to avoid duplication (malls with two Macy's stores as anchors).

Even if you avoid the department store that anchors your mall, your choice to shop at Banana Republic, the Gap, and Old Navy sends your dollars to the same parent company. And your choice to take a break at the food court to drink a Gatorade, eat a bag of Doritos, and a buy a Quaker granola bar for later also sends your dollars to the same parent corporation (in this case, PepsiCo). You may look up and wonder when Taco Bell started selling Kentucky Fried Chicken and Pizza Hut pizza (all three are part of YUM! corporation, which also owns A&W, and Long John Silvers. YUM! is a spinoff of PepsiCo).

Neil Wrigley, Neil Coe, and Andrew Currah have studied the globalization of retail corporations, such as Wal-Mart (US), Costco (U.S.), Ikea (Sweden), Metro (Germany), and Carrefour (France). In their comparison of manufacturing corporations and retail corporations, they found that global retailers are more spatially disaggregated, with stores in hundreds or thousands of locations, whereas global manufacturers are more spatially concentrated, especially at production sites. In addition, global retailers engage directly with consumers and have a local presence in a place that manufacturing corporations do not. Consumers who enter local stores interact directly with the global retailer at the local scale.

Also at the local scale, people have created numerous networks of protest against the building of a global retail store in their locality, whereas others have created networks to encourage and invite global retail stores to build in their community.

Analyzing the global consolidation of media, the global networks of development, and the global presence of retail corporations helps us see the diversity in global networks, where some are increasingly centralized and others are increasingly disaggregated. In each case, the global network does not change local places uniformly. People interact with the global network, shaping it, resisting it, embracing it, and responding to globalization in unique ways.

THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY

Think of a place you have been where the global media have worked to create a synergy. Describe the presence of the global media entity in the place and show how the global

media have imprinted the cultural landscape of the place and how that imprint affected your experience in (and your sense of) the place?

HOW HAVE IDENTITIES CHANGED IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD?

Gillian Rose defines identity as "how we make sense of ourselves" and explains that we have identities at different scales: we have local, national, regional, and global identities. At each scale, place factors into our identities. We infuse places with meaning and emotions based on our experiences in the places. Few people living in the globalized world today are world travelers. And even many of those who have traveled the globe have missed out on the uniqueness of place by visiting only global cities, living the lives of businesspeople (visiting airports, office buildings, and hotels), or staying in luxurious resorts (separated from the "local") as tourists. How, then, can a person have a global identity if he or she has not experienced the globe?

Globalization networks interlink us, and the flow of information technology is a daily way in which we are interlinked with the globe. A person may be overwhelmed by the flow of information and choose to ignore it, but even this person has a global identity. People identify themselves by identifying with or against at the local, regional, and global scales. As the flow of information continues, many people feel a need to make sense of the world by identifying with people and places. People personalize the flow of information, and in so doing they feel more connected to the globe and alter their local cultural landscapes to reflect their feeling of connectedness.

Personal Connectedness

The news in 1995 that Princess Diana had died traveled quickly from global media sources among friends, family, and even strangers. Many felt the need to mourn for a princess they had never met in a place they had never been. Some wanted to leave a token offering for the princess—a rose, a note, a candle, a photograph. Impromptu shrines to Princess Diana cropped up at the British embassy in Washington, D.C., and at British embassies and consulates around the world. People in Britain left countless flowers at the royal palace in London, where Princess Diana resided.

In an incredibly divided world, in which the rift between rich and poor is growing at the global scale, what made people feel connected to a woman who represented the royal family, an elite group of people of wealth and

Guest Field Note

Arlington, Virginia

Arlington National Cemetery on Memorial Day, 1994. In the foreground are the graves of President John F. Kennedy and his wife Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis had been buried here only a week before I took this photo, having died of cancer on May 19th. Thousands of visitors came to Arlington Cemetery and waited in line for hours to pay their respects to the former first lady. The Kennedy gravesite and Arlington National Cemetery are examples of places that can help people localize and personalize loss. In my research for *Shadowed Ground* I have visited hundreds of such places in the United States and Europe. I am still surprised by the power of these places. They produce strong emotions and sometimes leave visitors—and me—in tears. By allowing individuals to share loss, tragedy, and sorrow with others, these places can sometimes allow people to build community and a sense of common purpose.

Credit: Kenneth E. Foote, University of Colorado at Boulder

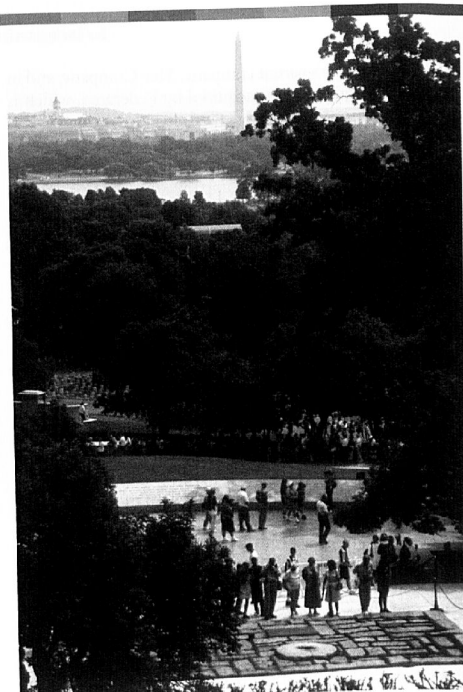


Figure 14.5

privilege? The idea that people around the world are linked and have shared experiences, such as death, tragedy, and sorrow, draws from Benedict Anderson's concept of the nation as an imagined community (see Chapter 8). When massive tragedies such as 9/11, the Indian Ocean tsunami, or Hurricane Katrina occur, people often talk about someone they knew who was in the place (or had been at some point), someone who died (even those they did not know but heard about in the news), or an act of bravery or triumph that occurred in the midst of tragedy. The desire to *personalize*, to *localize* a tragedy feeds off of the imagined global community in which we live. In the process of personalizing and localizing, a tragedy can be *globalized* in an effort to appeal to the humanity of all people in the hope that all feel or experience tangentially the loss.

When a death or a tragedy does happen, how do people choose a local space in which to express a personal and/or global sorrow? In a world where many academics

argue that place and territory are unimportant because things like global superhighways of information transcend place, people continue to recognize territories and create places. In the case of Princess Diana's death, people created hundreds of spaces of sorrow to mourn the loss of a magnanimous person whose life was cut short. In the case of September 11, people transformed home, school, public space, and houses of worship into spaces of reflection by creating human chains, participating in moments of silence, or holding prayer vigils for the victims.

In his book *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy*, Kenneth Foote examines the "spontaneous shrines" created at the place of loss or at a place that represents loss and describes these spontaneous shrines as a "first stage in the commemoration of a disaster." Foote draws from extensive field research of landscapes of tragedy and violence in the United States to show how people mark or do not mark tragedy, both immediately with spontaneous shrines and in the longer

term with permanent memorials (Fig. 14.5). Foote examines the struggles over whether and how to memorialize significant people or experienced tragedy. His research focuses on the United States, and after tracing and following the stories of hundreds of people and places, Foote concludes that "the debate over what, why, when, and where to build" a memorial for a person or event is "best considered a part of the grieving process."

Foote realized the ways sites are memorialized or not vary over time and across a multitude of circumstances, such as whether funding is available, the kind of structure to build, what to write on a sign, who should be remembered

(only those who died or also those injured?), whether the site represents a socially contested event (which often happens when racism is involved), and whether people want to remember the site. In recent American history, major terrorist attacks have been memorialized, often with the word "closure" evoked. Oklahoma City permanently memorialized the site of a terrorist attack at the Murrah Federal Building on the five-year anniversary of the tragedy. Other tragedies, such as that experienced at the World Trade Center in New York City on September 11, 2001 take longer to memorialize (Fig. 14.6). Millions of people have a personal connection to the World Trade Center site, and so



Figure 14.6

New York, New York. The World Trade Center site currently has commuter trains running through it. Leaders are finding it difficult to reach an agreement on how best to memorialize the victims of September 11 at this site. This photo was taken on Memorial Day 2002. Since then, the heavy machinery and temporary trailers have largely been removed from the site. © AP/Wide World Photos.

consensus on how the site should be memorialized and used has been elusive.

The din of information flowing our way each day is often overwhelming. As people filter through or ignore the flow of information, they may personalize the information and may differentiate themselves from the people or place, but in the end many people's identities are shaped by the global scale. Living in a world, at a scale we have not experienced previously, changes us and profoundly changes places. Globalization, for good or for ill, has modified how

we interact and has shaped how we make sense of ourselves in our world, our state, our region, our locality.



THINKING



GEOGRAPHICALLY

How does the personalization of tragedy, such as September 11, the Indian Ocean tsunami, or Hurricane Katrina promote both globalization and localization at the same time?

Summary

Globalization has been compared to a runaway train blowing through stations leaving much of the world to stare at its caboose, but this description is not entirely accurate. Globalization is a series of processes, not all of which are headed in the same direction down a track to a single, united, homogeneous globe. Even the processes headed down the globalization track are often stopped, sent back to the previous station, or derailed. The globalization track is not inevitable or irreversible (in the words of O'Loughlin, Staeheli, and Greenberg). Many of the most important globalization processes take place within networks of global cities (see Chapter 9), of places linked by popular culture (see Chapter 4), of governments (see Chapter 8), of trade (see chapter 12), and of development (see Chapter 10). At any point along any of these networks are people and places. Just as people make and remake places, people can make and remake globalization.

Geographic Concepts

globalization
Washington Consensus
networks
participatory development

local exchange trading
system
vertical integration

synergy
gatekeepers
horizontal integration

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Columbia Journalism Review's Who Owns What Website
www.cjr.org/tools/owners/

About Media Ownership by the Big Six
a 2001 diagram of ownership by the Big Six
<http://www.mediachannel.org/ownership/chart.shtml>

About the Network of World Cities
http://www.brook.edu/metro/pubs/20050222_worldcities.pdf

About weblogs
<http://www.cjr.org/issues/2003/5/blog-welch.asp>
<http://www.cjr.org/issues/2003/5/blogsidebar-welch.asp>

About the World Economic Forum
<http://www.weforum.org/>

About the World Social Forum
www.forumsocialmundial.org

APPENDIX A

Maps

The geographer's greatest ally is the map. Maps can present enormous amounts of information very effectively, and can be used to establish theories and solve problems. Furthermore, maps often are fascinating, revealing things no other medium can. It has been said that if a picture is worth a thousand words, then a map is worth a million.

Maps can be fascinating, but they often do not get the attention they deserve. You may spend 20 minutes carefully reading a page of text, but how often have you spent 20 minutes with a page-size map, studying what it reveals? No caption and no paragraph of text can begin to summarize what a map may show; it is up to the reader to make the best use of it. For example, in the chapters on population issues we study several maps that depict the human condition by country, in terms of birth and death rates, infant mortality, calorie intake, life expectancy, and so on. In the text, we can refer only to highlights (and low points) on those maps. But make a point of looking beyond the main issue to get a sense of the global distributions these maps represent. It is part of an intangible but important process: to enhance your mental map of this world.

While on the topic of maps, we should remind ourselves that a map—any map—is an incomplete representation of reality. In the first place, the map is smaller than the real world it represents. Second, it must depict the curved surface of our world on a flat plane, for example, a page of this book. And third, it must contain symbols to convey the information that must be transmitted to the reader. These are the three fundamental properties of all maps: scale, projection, and symbols.

Understanding these basics helps us interpret maps while avoiding their pitfalls. Some maps look so convincing that we may not question them as we would a paragraph of text. Yet maps, by their very nature, to some extent distort reality. Most of the time, such distortion is necessary and does not invalidate the map's message. But some maps are drawn deliberately to mislead. Propaganda maps, for example, may exaggerate or distort reality to promote political

aims. We should be alert to cartographic mistakes when we read maps. The proper use of scale, projection, and symbolization ensures that a map is as accurate as it can be made.

MAP SCALE

The *scale* of a map reveals how much the real world has been reduced to fit on the page or screen on which it appears. It is the ratio between an actual distance on the ground and the length given to that distance on the map, using the same units of measurement. This ratio is often represented as a fraction (e.g., 1/10,000 or 1/10,000). This means that one unit on the map represents 10,000 such units in the real world. If the unit is 1 inch, then an inch on the map represents 10,000 inches on the ground, or slightly more than 833 feet. (The metric system certainly makes things easier. One centimeter on the map would actually represent 10,000 cm or 100 meters.) Such a scale would be useful when mapping a city's downtown area, but it would be much too large for the map of an entire state. As the real-world area we want to map gets larger, we must make our map scale smaller. As small as the fraction 1/10,000 seems, it still is 10 times as large as 1/100,000, and 100 times as large as 1/1,000,000. If the world maps in this book had fractional scales, they would be even smaller. A large-scale map can contain much more detail and be far more representative of the real world than a small-scale map. Look at it this way: when we devote almost a full page of this book to a map of a major city (Fig. A.1), we are able to represent the layout of that city in considerable detail. But if the entire continental realm in which that city is located must be represented on a single page, the city becomes just a large dot on that small-scale map, and the detail is lost in favor of larger-area coverage (Fig. A.2). So the selection of scale depends on the objective of the map.