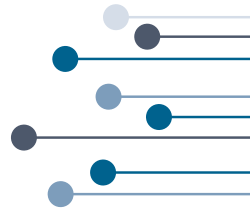


# CHAPTER 11

## Social Justice in the 21st Century



### Introduction

The needs of people know no borders.<sup>1</sup> This means that the flow of capital, labor, technology, and information across national boundaries has become almost as easy as their movement inside a country. Therefore, issues of social justice that primarily have been seen as domestic concerns must now be viewed from a global vantage point: It is a perspective requiring new depth and greater insight.<sup>2</sup> Looking ahead, social workers will have to examine factors leading to inequality, oppression, prejudice, and the growing gap between rich and poor in an increasingly international context.

This chapter pursues that broader analysis by considering global trends and political changes likely to influence social workers—and alter the way they will practice—in future decades. The discussion delves into how the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 (referred to as 9/11) changed the United States, and how globalization has further shaped economic and social policies affecting minority and disadvantaged populations subjected to discrimination and other types of injustice.

<sup>1</sup>Eileen Mayers Pasztor, Donna D. Petras, Rob van Pagee, Maria Herczog, and Michele Del Conte, “The Needs of Children Know No Borders: The Legacy of the PRIDE Model of Practice,” in Emily Jean McFadden and Myrna McNitt, eds., *Voices for the Forgotten—Thirty Years of the International Foster Care Organization* (Lexington, KY: International Foster Care Organisation, 2012), 147–173.

<sup>2</sup>Amanda Smith Barusch, *Foundations of Social Policy* (Itasca, IL: F. E. Peacock, 2002), 397–398.

### Chapter Questions

1. What are major benefits and drawbacks to globalization for the United States?
2. What is the relationship between globalization and trafficking?
3. What role does corporate America, especially the travel industry, have in trafficking intervention?
4. Why has international adoption become big business?
5. What factors led to the election and reelection of Barack Obama as president of the United States?
6. What are the implications for human rights around the world under globalization?
7. What has been the impact of 9/11 on social policy in the United States?
8. What impact have the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan had on social policy in the United States?
9. What does the election and reelection of Barack Obama signify in terms of future openings for social justice and social change?

Two overriding pressures—globalization and rising inequality—are likely to define the context of social work in coming years.<sup>3</sup> These trends already are evident, from corporations moving jobs overseas to growing income gaps among various groups in the United States, as well as between developed and developing countries.

The broader focus, meanwhile, also brings new attention to issues of human rights, with important implications for child welfare and international adoptions, human trafficking, forced labor, and immigration patterns. By adopting a global standpoint, social work students, practitioners, administrators, and educators reading this book may come to see consumers, clients, workplaces, communities, and even national issues as being more complex and perplexing than in the past.

The earlier chapter on the market economy discussed globalization and why it is of concern to social workers. Globalization involves the “closer integration of the countries and peoples of the world . . . brought about by the enormous reduction of costs of transportation and communication and the breaking down of artificial barriers to the flows of goods, services, capital, knowledge . . . across borders.”<sup>4</sup> Globalization depends partly on lowering tariffs (or artificial barriers to trade) between countries, which historically were erected to protect domestic manufacturers from competition for foreign goods. Globalization encourages free trade by removing these barriers. It also often results in the migration of people from one country to another, though globalization doesn’t formally endorse population shifts. While social workers in the industrialized world are starting to recognize fallout from globalization on individuals, families, and groups with whom they work, such dramatic impacts already have become routine parts of daily economic, political, and social life in less developed countries.

Transnational corporations—with headquarters in one country but operations spread around the globe—have brought both the benefits of market capitalism and its accompanying social costs. Social workers may notice the impact of globalization in the contraction of jobs in industrialized countries, resulting in higher local unemployment rates. Corporations increasingly are choosing to operate in developing countries where labor is less expensive and regulations affecting corporations and profits are looser. Social workers may also experience the impact of globalization through increased migration of workers, both voluntary and involuntary, as jobs and factories shift across borders. Those in the social work profession may also recognize the environmental impact of the global economic network as pollution stemming from one country moves across others.

People may be affected by the spread of diseases such as HIV/AIDS or avian flu, which transcend national boundaries. In addition, they may experience the perils of unstable global financial markets, reflecting today’s complex connections between disparate economies and

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: Norton, 2003), 9.

industries. Yet globalization also has benefits. Under some circumstances, it has the potential for many positive outcomes, including increased awareness of multicultural connections and broader horizons for personal and professional development. One social work scholar defined globalization as a “process of global integration in which diverse peoples, economics, cultures and political processes are increasingly subjected to international influences.” At its best, the process of globalization could lead to an “inclusive worldwide culture, a global economy and above all, a shared awareness of the world as a single place.”<sup>5</sup>

Globalization has had positive results for people in various parts of the world, for example, countries south of the United States. Some writers refer to them as the Global South rather than developing countries, arguing that use of the word *developing* connotes that Western-style industrialization is always a desirable goal.<sup>6</sup> Many people in the Global South live better and longer lives as a result of globalization; they have received foreign aid and have had at least part of their national debts forgiven, and sometimes the result is that goods are cheaper in local economies than otherwise.<sup>7</sup>

Globalization has some profound downsides, too, including increased poverty and inequality, environmental pollution, migration and dislocation, growth of immigration and refugees, and human trafficking, all of which are discussed in this chapter. Since there is no world-governing body committed to looking at social policy solutions to these negative consequences of globalization, there are no policies to mitigate them. In spite of an undeniable increase in the standard of living in some countries, the overall divide between the haves and have-nots has increased under globalization.<sup>8</sup>

The term *international social work* has been added to many textbooks and social work courses as a way to acknowledge that social workers operate in an interconnected world. However, the discussion often has been too narrowly defined as social workers working with, or for, an array of international organizations. Rather, the focus ought to be dealing with social problems resulting from the interplay of global population and development trends with the activities of transnational (sometimes referred to as *multinational*) corporations in less developed countries.

Globalization brings new attention to the issue of human rights, with implications for human trafficking and forced labor, international adoptions, and immigration. These issues are considered within the context of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (see Tables 11.1 and 11.2).

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<sup>5</sup>James Midgley, *Social Work in a Global Context* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997), xi, 21.

<sup>6</sup>Malcolm Payne and Gurid Askeland, *Globalization and International Social Work* (Hampshire, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2008), 1.

<sup>7</sup>Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, 4–5.

<sup>8</sup>Stiglitz, *Ibid.*, 5; William Roth, *The Assault on Social Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 24–26.

## **Table 11.1 Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

### ***Preamble***

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, therefore,

### **The General Assembly**

proclaims

### **This Universal Declaration of Human Rights**

as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

### **Article 1**

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

### **Article 2**

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

### **Article 3**

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

### **Article 4**

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

### **Article 5**

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

### **Article 6**

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

### **Article 7**

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

### **Article 8**

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

### **Article 9**

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

*(Continued)*

## **Table 11.1 (Continued)**

### **Article 10**

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

### **Article 11**

- (1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense.
- (2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

### **Article 12**

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

### **Article 13**

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.
- (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

### **Article 14**

- (1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
- (2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

### **Article 15**

- (1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.
- (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

### **Article 16**

- (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
- (2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.
- (3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

### **Article 17**

- (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
- (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

### **Article 18**

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

### **Article 19**

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

### **Article 20**

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
- (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

### **Article 21**

- (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
- (2) Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.
- (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

*(Continued)*

## **Table 11.1 (Continued)**

### **Article 22**

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

### **Article 23**

- (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
- (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
- (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
- (4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

### **Article 24**

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

### **Article 25**

- (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
- (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

### **Article 26**

- (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.



- (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
- (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

### **Article 27**

- (1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
- (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

### **Article 28**

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

### **Article 29**

- (1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.
- (2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.
- (3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

### **Article 30**

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

*Source:* From The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, by The Commission on Human Rights, © 1948 United Nations. Reprinted with the permission of the United Nations.

## **Table 11.2 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

### **Convention on the Rights of the Child**

*Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989 entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49*

#### **Preamble**

The States Parties to the present Convention,

Considering that, in accordance with the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Bearing in mind that the peoples of the United Nations have, in the Charter, reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person, and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Recognizing that the United Nations has, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenants on Human Rights, proclaimed and agreed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,

Recalling that, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has proclaimed that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance,

Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community,

Recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

Considering that the child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity,

Bearing in mind that the need to extend particular care to the child has been stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 and in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1959

and recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (in particular in articles 23 and 24), in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (in particular in article 10) and in the statutes and relevant instruments of specialized agencies and international organizations concerned with the welfare of children,

Bearing in mind that, as indicated in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, “the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth,”

Recalling the provisions of the Declaration on Social and Legal Principles relating to the Protection and Welfare of Children, with Special Reference to Foster Placement and Adoption Nationally and Internationally; the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules); and the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict, Recognizing that, in all countries in the world, there are children living in exceptionally difficult conditions, and that such children need special consideration, Taking due account of the importance of the traditions and cultural values of each people for the protection and harmonious development of the child, Recognizing the importance of international co-operation for improving the living conditions of children in every country, in particular in the developing countries,

Have agreed as follows:

## **Part I**

### **Article 1**

Everyone under 18 years of age has all the rights in this Convention.

### **Article 2**

The Convention applies to everyone whatever their race, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.

### **Article 3**

All organizations concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child.

### **Article 4**

Governments should make these rights available to children.

### **Article 5**

Governments should respect the rights and responsibilities of families to guide their children so that, as they grow up, they learn to use their rights properly.

*(Continued)*

## Table 11.2 (Continued)

### Article 6

Children have the right to live a full life. Governments should ensure that children survive and develop healthily.

### Article 7

Children have the right to a legally registered name and nationality. Children also have the right to know their parents and, as far as possible, to be cared for by them.

### Article 8

Governments should respect a child's right to a name, a nationality and family ties.

### Article 9

Children should not be separated from their parents unless it is for their own good. For example, if a parent is mistreating or neglecting a child. Children whose parents have separated have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this might harm the child.

### Article 10

Families who live in different countries should be allowed to move between those countries so that parents and children can stay in contact, or get back together as a family.

### Article 11

Governments should take steps to stop children being taken out of their own country illegally.

### Article 12

Children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them and to have their opinions taken into account.

### Article 13

Children have the right to get and to share information, as long as the information is not damaging to them or to others.

### Article 14

Children have the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Parents should guide children on these matters.

**Article 15**

Children have the right to meet with other children and young people and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

**Article 16**

Children have the right to privacy. The law should protect them from attacks against their way of life, their good name, their family and their home.

**Article 17**

Children have the right to reliable information from the media. Mass media such as television, radio and newspapers should provide information that children can understand and should not promote materials that could harm children.

**Article 18**

Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their children and should always consider what is best for each child. Governments should help parents by providing services to support them, especially if both parents work.

**Article 19**

Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.

**Article 20**

Children who cannot be looked after by their own family must be looked after properly by people who respect their religion, culture and language.

**Article 21**

When children are adopted the first concern must be what is best for them. The same rules should apply whether children are adopted in the country of their birth or if they are taken to live in another country.

**Article 22**

Children who come into a country as refugees should have the same rights as children who are born in that country.

**Article 23**

Children who have any kind of disability should receive special care and support so that they can live a full and independent life.

*(Continued)*

## **Table 11.2 (Continued)**

### **Article 24**

Children have the right to good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that they will stay healthy. Richer countries should help poorer countries achieve this.

### **Article 25**

Children who are looked after by their local authority rather than their parents should have their situation reviewed regularly.

### **Article 26**

The Government should provide extra money for the children of families in need.

### **Article 27**

Children have the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and mental needs. The government should help families who cannot afford to provide this.

### **Article 28**

Children have the right to an education. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Primary education should be free. Wealthier countries should help poorer countries achieve this.

### **Article 29**

Education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents, their cultures and other cultures.

### **Article 30**

Children have the right to learn and use the language and customs of their families, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live, as long as this does not harm others.

### **Article 31**

Children have the right to relax, play and to join in a wide range of leisure activities.

### **Article 32**

Governments should protect children from work that is dangerous or that might harm their health or education.

**Article 33**

Governments should provide ways of protecting children from dangerous drugs.

**Article 34**

Governments should protect children from sexual abuse.

**Article 35**

Governments should make sure that children are not abducted or sold.

**Article 36**

Children should be protected from any activities that could harm their development.

**Article 37**

Children who break the law should not be treated cruelly. They should not be put in a prison with adults and should be able to keep in contact with their family.

**Article 38**

Governments should not allow children under 15 to join the army. Children in war zones should receive special protection.

**Article 39**

Children who have been neglected or abused should receive special help to restore their self-respect.

**Article 40**

Children who are accused of breaking the law should receive legal help. Prison sentences for children should only be used for the most serious offences.

**Article 41**

If the laws of a particular country protects children better than the articles of the Convention, then those laws should override the Convention.

**Article 42**

Governments should make the Convention known to all parents and children.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child has 54 articles in all. Articles 43–54 are about how adults and governments should work together to make sure that all children get all their rights.

*Source:* From Convention on the Rights of the Child, by The Committee on the Rights of the Child, © 1989 United Nations. Reprinted with the permission of the United Nations.

The enumerated rights of the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights reflect one of the central tenets of the social work profession recognized in the National Association of Social Workers *Code of Ethics*: the mandate for social workers to challenge social injustice and pursue “social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people.”<sup>9</sup> These social change efforts must focus on issues related to “poverty, unemployment, discrimination and other forms of social injustice,” according to NASW.<sup>10</sup> Clearly the commitment to social justice must be extended globally, along with the recognition that globalization has an impact on persons in the United States, affecting their economic well-being and their social and political rights.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a set of non-negotiable standards and obligations, which set minimum entitlements and freedoms that governments should respect. They are founded on respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of race, color, gender, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth status or ability; they therefore apply to every human being everywhere. With these rights comes the obligation on both governments and individuals not to infringe on the parallel rights of others.

The U.N. Convention is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate the full range of human rights—civil, cultural, economic, political and social. In 1989, world leaders decided that children needed a special convention just for them because individuals under 18 years old often need special care and protection that adults do not. The leaders also wanted to make sure that the world recognized that children have human rights too.

The Convention spells out the basic human rights that children everywhere have, including the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural, and social life. The Convention’s four core principles are nondiscrimination; devotion to the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival, and development; and respect for the views of the child. Every right spelled out in the Convention is inherent to the human dignity and harmonious development of every child. The Convention protects children’s rights by setting standards in health care; education; and legal, civil, and social services.

By agreeing to the obligations of the Convention, national governments commit themselves to protecting and ensuring children’s rights and agree to hold themselves accountable for this commitment before the international community. Participants in the Convention are obliged to develop and undertake all actions and policies in the light of the best interests of the child.<sup>11</sup> The Convention is the most widely and rapidly ratified human rights treaty in history. Only two countries have not ratified the Convention—the United States and Somalia. Somalia is unable to proceed to ratification as it has no recognized government.

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<sup>9</sup>National Association of Social Workers, *Code of Ethics* (Washington, DC: NASW Press, 2006).

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>UNICEF, “Convention on the Rights of the Child,” April 4, 2013, <http://www.unicef.org/crc>.



The United States has signed the Convention, but has yet to ratify it. The United States extensively examines treaties before proceeding to ratification. This examination includes an evaluation of the degree of compliance with existing law and practice at state and federal levels, a process that can take years.<sup>12</sup>

## Economic Impacts of Globalization

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Proponents and opponents of globalization may not agree on much, but they both see it altering the world's economy at breakneck speed in unprecedented ways. Some of the key features include jobs in U.S. manufacturing and service industries that are outsourced overseas; fewer workers with higher skills able to boost corporate productivity rates; and seemingly intractable and widening gaps in income, wealth, education, skills, and status between classes and races globally and in this country. At the same time, the power of transnational corporations continues to increase even as the influence of countervailing political forces to control them erodes.<sup>13</sup>

Over the past few decades, per capita incomes in the richest nations grew, while the proportion of income received by inhabitants of the world's poorest nations declined. Through much of the 1990s, the wealthiest 20% of the world's population produced about 85% of its overall output, while the poorest one fifth produced less than 2%.<sup>14</sup> Just as inequality among nations continues to increase, income inequality among individuals in this country has widened dramatically since the advent of globalization—prompting some to call the United States a nation of extremes. Consider that in 2009, the last year for which such official government figures are available, a total of roughly 235,000 individuals and households reported earning \$1 million or more. Some told the Internal Revenue Service they earned more than \$100 million. For the head of an average household making \$35,000 a year, it would take nearly 65 lifetimes to reach that higher number.<sup>15</sup> But that same year—and for several that followed—1 out of 5 children nationwide lived on incomes below the federal poverty threshold.

Arguably the highest-profile manifestation of globalization has been the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which went into effect on January 1, 1994, creating a regional “free

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<sup>12</sup>UNICEF, “Convention on the Rights of the Child: Frequently Asked Questions,” November 30, 2005, [http://www.unicef.org/crc/index\\_30229.html](http://www.unicef.org/crc/index_30229.html), accessed August 22, 2013.

<sup>13</sup>Michael Reisch, “Not by the Numbers Alone: The Effects of Economic and Demographic Change on Social Policy,” in Ira C. Colby, Catherine N. Dulmus, and Karen M. Sowers, eds., *Social Work and Social Policy: Advancing the Principles of Economic and Social Justice* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2013), 149.

<sup>14</sup>Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, *Income Inequality Grew Across the Country Over the Past Two Decades* (Washington, DC: Author, 2006).

<sup>15</sup>Gregory Mantsios, “Class in America: Myths and Realities,” in Paula S. Rothenberg, ed., *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study*, 5th ed. (New York: Worth Publishers, 2000), 168–182.

trade” area among the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Proponents of NAFTA claimed it would create jobs, eliminate barriers to trade, and raise living standards. While importing goods from overseas may result in lower consumer prices in some cases, multinational corporations laid off hundreds of thousands of workers in the United States as they exported their manufacturing and services to countries in the Global South, where salaries are lower.

By some estimates, half a million United States jobs were lost as corporations moved production to Mexico to utilize or exploit cheaper labor, depending on the point of view. From 1992 to 2002, approximately 1 million jobs were lost in the United States due to the rise of imports from Mexico and, to a lesser extent, Canada, which replaced domestically made goods. As U.S. manufacturers like General Electric moved part of their operation to Mexico, job losses in the United States accelerated. Just the threat of moving to Mexico gave U.S.–based companies enhanced leverage in labor negotiations.<sup>16</sup> Despite the widespread belief that globalization helps less economically advantaged countries like Mexico by creating new jobs, tens of thousands of small Mexican businesses were forced to close after

enactment of NAFTA because they could not compete with transnational corporations. The competition from U.S. imports undermined the Mexican economy and led to 8 million Mexican families dropping out of the middle class and into poverty between 1994 and 2000, while the number of Mexicans working for less than minimum wage increased by a million or so over the same period.<sup>17</sup>

One of the major problems with globalization, according to critics, is that the United States hasn't allowed countries in the Global South to export their agricultural products to the extent initially envisioned. Such restrictions, among other things, protect the prices farmers receive in the United States. But in turn, these policies have helped push farmers from

the Global South out of business and created widespread unemployment. One consequence of this trade imbalance in agriculture is that globalization has helped industrialized countries far more than it has countries in the Global South.

Across the board, these critics argue, tariffs generally favor industrialized nations in the Global North at the expense of countries in the Global South. For example, tariffs on goods



Farm workers

SOURCE: AP Photo/Lynne Sladky.

<sup>16</sup>Jeff Faux, *Global Class War* (New York: Wiley, 2006), 129–139.

<sup>17</sup>Jessica Maxwell, “Corporate Globalization,” Peace Council, accessed November 11, 2008, <http://www.peacecouncil.net/pnl/03/723/Globalization.htm>.

manufactured by large industrialized countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are one quarter of those on goods manufactured by countries outside the OECD, primarily in the Global South. Until recently, this discrepancy made it virtually impossible for most countries in the Global South to compete with OECD countries in world markets, because their goods were more expensive.<sup>18</sup> While globalization tends to boost employment in non-Western countries, it also negatively affects local producers, who must compete with the economies of scale enjoyed by large corporations. To compete, local producers may reduce the price of goods by cutting wages or employment, thereby hurting local workers.

In the ideal world envisioned by advocates of globalization, nations in the Global South compete with each other to offer social and political environments most hospitable to foreign investment, including favorable tax codes, environmental laws, and other rules.<sup>19</sup> Yet the contours of globalization also are influenced by social protest on the ground. Since globalization brings with it inequality, and often loss of income for local producers, many have protested its power and reach. Struggles over globalization have taken place in a host of developed and developing countries, spanning groups at the local, regional, and international level. Protests have focused on demands that international corporations and organizations adopt socially and environmentally responsible economic policies.<sup>20</sup>

Protestors have ranged from international labor movements focusing on issues related to health and safety, to groups advocating enhanced protections for women and child workers. Many of these labor movements were inspired by NAFTA. Other struggles against the clout of transnational corporations include international campaigns by consumer groups to improve standards for workers within particular industries (e.g., the drive targeting worker conditions in the Guatemalan textile industries that work for Gap, Inc.). When protestors urged consumers to redirect their spending from international corporations that exploit workers, the effort was relatively successful insofar as the critics received media support.<sup>21</sup>

So far the consequences of globalization are mixed. Jobs and living standards have been boosted in portions of the Global South, with prospects for further improvements as additional trade agreements are negotiated. However, the market economy tends to drive social policies in the Global South, meaning they can be undercut by the exigencies of shifting economic currents. The World Bank, one of the primary lenders seeking to assist developing countries, years ago recognized this potential pitfall. It said that “inequality of opportunity,

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<sup>18</sup>Susan Mapp, *Human Rights and Social Justice in a Global Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 14.

<sup>19</sup>Nicola Yeates, “Globalization and Social Policy: From Global Neoliberal Hegemony to Global Political Pluralism,” *Global Social Policy* 2, no. 1 (2002): 70.

<sup>20</sup>Yeates, “Globalization and Social Policy,” 69–89.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 79.

both within and among nations, sustains extreme deprivation, results in wasted human potential, and often weakens prospects for overall prosperity and economic growth.”<sup>22</sup>

## Human Rights and Globalization

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In addition to immigrants voluntarily flocking to industrialized countries to escape deprivation and sometimes political persecution, there also continues to be widespread involuntary movement of infants, children, young people, and adults.

### Trafficking: Trauma and Big Business

Forced labor exists throughout the world, but it is more prevalent in South Asia and Brazil, where economic deprivation and debt pushes individuals into cruel situations of bondage and coerced domestic labor. The United Nations defines forced labor as “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which said person has not offered himself voluntarily.” U.N. experts estimate that globally, at least 12 million people are exploited through forced labor, with the majority being women and girls.<sup>23</sup> Underscoring the difficulties of gathering accurate data, other estimates peg the total closer to 27 million people.<sup>24</sup>

In the United States, on a daily basis, countless children are victims of human trafficking, also known as commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC). According to the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, the U.S. government defines sex trafficking as “the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for the purposes of a commercial sex act.”<sup>25</sup> According to brochures distributed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery in which victims are subject to force, fraud, or coercion. They can be young girls and boys, women and men. Child victims of trafficking are typically found in commercial sex, domestic servitude (servants), sweatshop factories, construction, farming, fisheries, hotel and tourist industries, panhandling, janitorial work, and restaurant services. In extreme cases, children selling candy in front of local grocery stores may be doing so against their will.

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<sup>22</sup>The World Bank, “World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development,” accessed November 18, 2008, <http://go.worldbank.org/UWYLBR43C0>.

<sup>23</sup>Quoted in Mapp, *Human Rights and Social Justice in a Global Perspective*, 29.

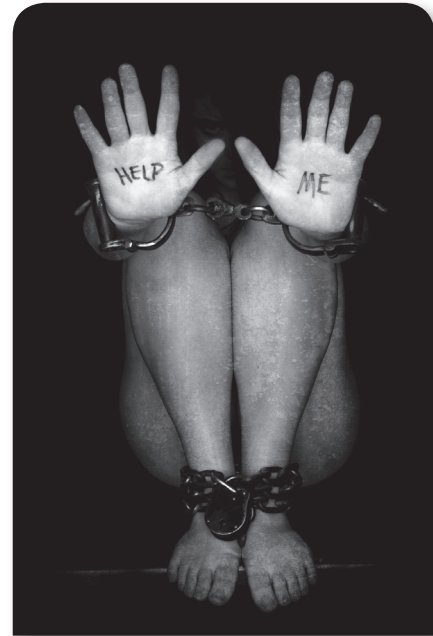
<sup>24</sup>Kevin Bales, *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), 5.

<sup>25</sup>*Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000* (Pub. L. No. 106–386), October 28, 2000, [www.state.gov/documents/organization/10492.pdf](http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/10492.pdf).

Typically young women from other countries are recruited under the guise of coming to the United States to be nannies, models, reunite with families, marry, or work legitimate jobs. Not knowing the language, they are sometimes raped by traffickers wearing police uniforms to make them afraid to talk to legitimate law enforcement (in the event they found a way to communicate). Such victims are threatened with harm or even death—and those threats often extend to their families—in order to make them comply with demands of the traffickers.

Experts calculate that sale of trafficked victims is almost as profitable as the sale of arms and drugs—two areas of criminal activity that traditionally attracted greater police attention. According to UNICEF, the overall profits from human trafficking may amount to \$32 billion each year.<sup>26</sup> Children can be kidnapped or sold by parents for \$1,000 in one country, trafficked to the United States and then sold here for \$20,000. Young women may be recruited in Eastern Europe, for instance, and then trafficked through Western Europe and Canada or Mexico before coming to the United States. Trafficked persons are coming from an increasingly wide range of ethnic and racial backgrounds; over the years, sexually exploited children have been identified as coming from more than 40 different countries of origin.<sup>27</sup>

Trafficking is distinct from traditional forced labor, because it involves deception or coercion leading to a high risk of ending in sexual exploitation or prostitution. The U.S. Department of State estimates that, worldwide, the sex trade exploits about 2 million children annually.<sup>28</sup> Victims of sexual trafficking may be beaten into submission, their passports may be stolen, and they may be locked up when not performing sexual acts on command. Thailand is a destination for sexual trafficking of women from Cambodia and China, as well as the source of sexual trafficking to Japan and Taiwan. Women are tricked or



The faces of human trafficking :  
Victim to survivors

SOURCES: © iStockphoto.com/rdegrie & © Reuters/Corbis.

<sup>26</sup>United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, “Factsheet on Human Trafficking,” accessed August 25, 2013, [http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/UNVTF\\_fs\\_HT\\_EN.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/UNVTF_fs_HT_EN.pdf).

<sup>27</sup>David R. Hodge, “Sexual Trafficking in the United States: A Domestic Problem With Transnational Dimensions, *Social Work*, 53, no. 2 (2008): 143–152.

<sup>28</sup>U.S. Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report*, 8th ed. (Washington, DC: Author, 2008), 7.

coerced into becoming prostitutes, a situation from which they can rarely escape. Foreign law enforcement often looks the other way, and few traffickers are brought to the attention of the police or prosecuted. Sexual trafficking is highly profitable; its victims are likely to be forced to work as prostitutes or in related segments of the multibillion dollar sex industry, including pornography.<sup>29</sup> By some estimates, about 27 million people are enslaved around the world, with only around 47,000 identified last year and a mere 4,746 of their captors convicted.<sup>30</sup>

Still other trafficking victims are American citizens. They are displaced youth who are runaways from birth or foster families, or group homes. The United States and other industrialized countries in the Global North are the main destinations for those trafficking in human beings. By its most recent assessment, the U.S. State Department reports that approximately 17,500 persons are trafficked into the United States annually, though the clandestine nature of the activities makes it impossible to measure accurately.<sup>31</sup> The United Nations estimates that the United States is the second most popular destination for sexual trafficking, after Italy. This country also is a center of the Internet-based pornography business, including child pornography. Sexual trafficking victims, especially children, may be forced to perform sexual acts, in spite of laws against child pornography.<sup>32</sup>

Congress passed the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act in 2000, which protects victims of sexual trafficking from prosecution and grants them a “T-visa,” permitting them to remain in the United States during prosecution of their traffickers. Federal authorities will assist them with services during this period; after 3 years they can apply for permanent residency.

While trafficking is big business from a nefarious perspective, corporate America is beginning to pay attention and take preventive action. The travel industry, “an unwitting participant in human trafficking,” is collaborating with the U.S. Departments of Homeland Security and Transportation to crack down on such crimes. Companies such as Travelocity and Amtrak are training their employees to identify signs of trafficking, either on the part of the persons being trafficked or evidence left in hotel rooms.<sup>33</sup>

Although services for victims of human trafficking have now been available through the 2000 legislation, which has been repeatedly reauthorized in later years, the law mostly

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<sup>29</sup>Mapp, *Human Rights and Social Justice in a Global Perspective*, 32.

<sup>30</sup>Luis CdeBaca, “Briefing on the 2013 Trafficking in Persons Report,” June 19, 2013, U.S. Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/rm/2013/210906.htm>.

<sup>31</sup>Liana Sun Wyler and Alison Siskin, “Trafficking in Persons: U.S. Policy and Issues for Congress,” August 4, 2010, <http://ipc.state.gov/documents/organization/147256.pdf>.

<sup>32</sup>David Hodge, “Sexual Trafficking in the United States: A Domestic Problem With Transnational Dimensions,” 143–151.

<sup>33</sup>Tanya Mohn, “The Travel Industry Takes on Human Trafficking,” *New York Times*, November 9, 2012, F-12.

benefits internationally trafficked victims. American children who are victims of CSEC continue to receive comparatively little attention and help. Relatively few organizations and individuals across the country have stepped forward to address this crime of epidemic proportions and its invisible child victims.<sup>34</sup>

Children victims and survivors of CSEC have unique, complex, and interrelated needs. In order to give them the support they need, there is a need for service providers who are trained to work specifically with this population, and they should be available across all agencies that serve children. Specialized public awareness programs are also needed. One example is Look Beneath the Surface, a federally sponsored public education campaign from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement, which is intended to make helping professionals—such as those working in hospital emergency rooms—more mindful of signs pointing to potential trafficking or related sexual abuse. In addition, websites can disseminate essential information to large audiences with just a few quick clicks.

There are various tactics social workers and other professionals can use to detect trafficking. Asking someone, “Could you leave your job if you wanted to?” and then watching for a fearful reaction might provide clues about a trafficked person. Another approach is teaching young women to put a spoon or piece of metal in their underwear when they travel by air, which might trigger additional scrutiny from screeners at the airport—and perhaps a chance to ask for help or escape.

Stricter enforcement of the laws surrounding the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act could deter violations, and outreach by social workers working with immigrant groups is the first step in stopping this deplorable practice. Of course, the inequalities fostered in the Global South by the forces of globalization facilitate all human trafficking. Viable roles in domestic economies for women and men in the Global South would constitute a strong deterrent to the practice of sexual trafficking.

Another equally important step would be for social workers and other interest groups to urge the U.S. Senate to ratify the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1948 (see Table 11.1). According to this accord, every human being has economic, political, and social rights, which include the affirmation that “all humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”<sup>35</sup> The U.S. Senate has also refused

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<sup>34</sup>Katherine F. Hargitt, *Development of a Training Model and Curriculum Outline for Counselors/Advocates of Commercially Sexually Exploited Children in the United States*, 2011. A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the California Institute of Integral Studies, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Psychology, in Clinical Psychology, California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, CA.

<sup>35</sup>Quoted in Mapp, *Human Rights and Social Justice in a Global Perspective*, 18.

to ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Republican administrations in the years since President Carter signed this treaty in 1979 have argued that “economic, social and cultural rights” (such as the right to join a union and the right to adequate housing) aren’t rights at all and are not in line with the belief in individual responsibility held by many Americans. They have refused to adopt the treaty.<sup>36</sup> Neither President Clinton nor President Obama has pushed for Senate ratification either.

What can social workers do about forced labor and sexual trafficking? Coming forward to self-identify as a victim of sexual trafficking and claiming the rights and benefits under the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act is not easy; most victims live in secrecy, as their traffickers keep them out of public view in order to avoid exposure. Social workers and other advocates can facilitate disclosure by advocating for sexual trafficking victims’ rights to emergency shelter and safe houses. Once victims are safely removed from their dangerous environments, social workers can work to help them access all the benefits they are entitled to under the law.<sup>37</sup> Social workers must inform themselves on how to rescue, report, and restore the dignity of trafficked persons so that they can become survivors.

## International Adoption: Babies for Export and Import

Globalization has also enabled a significant adoption industry to exist. Some would say the movement of thousands of babies and young children (either orphaned or from parents too poor to care for them) has been a positive child welfare program. Others would argue that taking children who have no say in their futures from their countries of origin to grow up in families who have purchased them is an issue of social and economic justice.

The practice of large-scale, formal efforts to move children from other countries to the United States for adoption was pioneered in the 1950s by Harry and Bertha Holt, a farming couple from Oregon. Although there had been prior endeavors to bring European and Japanese war orphans to the United States, the inspiration of the Holts paved the way for what some now refer to as widespread “importing of children” for adoptive families in this country. In the wake of the Korean War, the Holts were touched by the plight of large numbers of Amerasian children (Korean mothers, American servicemen fathers) who were orphaned or rejected and living in Korean orphanages. Their attempt to adopt eight children was initially thwarted as the United States had no laws permitting the import of children from other countries for adoption. The Holts’ efforts eventually inspired Congress to pass legislation permitting the adoption of children from other countries into the United States.

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<sup>36</sup>Kevin Robillard, “10 Treaties the U.S. Hasn’t Ratified,” July 24, 2012, <http://www.politico.com/gallery/2012/07-10-treaties-the-u-s-hasnt-ratified/000303-003927.html>.

<sup>37</sup>Hargitt, *Development of a Training Model and Curriculum Outline for Counselors/Advocates of Commercially Sexually Exploited Children in the United States*.



This led to the creation of Holt International, an agency that for over 50 years has placed adoptively some 40,000 children from around the world.

Unlike the United States child welfare system in which most children transition from child protective services to foster family care to adoptive families, international adoptions focus on children from other countries who are abandoned, orphaned, and almost always coming from institutions. Their genetic, physical, medical, and psychological makeup typically reflects risk for “impaired health, development difficulties, behavioral problems, and attachment challenges.”<sup>38</sup> But war and its aftermath are not the only factors leading countries to allow their children to be adopted abroad. Over the last two decades, desperate poverty and social upheaval have been critical factors in the adoption of children from Latin America, the former Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe. In China, government population-control policies contribute to the abandonment of infant girls and overcrowded orphanages—factors in the government’s decision to facilitate international adoptions.

In pure financial terms, domestic adoption by foster parent(s) through a public child welfare agency is the least expensive option by a significant margin, with an average cost of under \$2,300. Domestic adoption of newborns, whether independent (between the birth mother and adoptive parents), or through a private agency, costs in the range of \$30,000 to \$34,000 (see Table 11.3).<sup>39</sup>

Compared to domestic alternatives, international adoption costs are significantly higher. According to a survey of people who adopted in 2010–11, the average cost of an adoption from Russia is over \$66,000 and from China it is in the range of \$32,000. Ethiopian, Ukrainian, and South Korean adoptions average \$34,000, \$42,000, and \$47,000 respectively. This significant range in costs is due in part to travel fees, visas, legal costs, and the occasional mandatory philanthropic “donation” to a child’s orphanage (see Table 11.4).<sup>40</sup> Because most lower-income families would consider these costs beyond their means, such adoption possibilities raise questions of equity and social justice that go beyond the specifics of individual pairings.

Over a quarter of a million children (265,677) have been internationally adopted into the United States from the 1970s to the turn of the 21st century. The pace has been picking up, partly reflecting growing public awareness and acceptance of the practice in this country.

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<sup>38</sup>Victor Groza, Lindsey Houlihan, and Zoe Breen Wood, “Overview of Adoption”, in Gerald P. Mallon and Peg McCartt-Hess, eds., *Child Welfare for the 21st Century: A Handbook of Practices, Policies, and Programs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 442.

<sup>39</sup>“Cost of Adoption Update: 2010–2011,” *Adoptive Families*, 2013, accessed July 22, 2013, <http://www.adoptivefamilies.com/articles.php?aid=2350>.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

**Table 11.3 U.S. Average Domestic Adoption Cost 2010–2011**

	<b>Domestic Newborn Private Agency</b>	<b>Domestic Newborn Independent</b>	<b>U.S. Foster Care Public Agency</b>
Home Study Fee	\$1,820	\$1,538	\$285
Document Preparation/Authentication	\$768	\$680	\$0
Adoption Agency Application and Program Fees	\$14,441	\$4,608	\$0
Legal Fees	\$3,536	\$10,331	\$686
Advertising/Networking	\$2,172	\$3,437	\$0
Birth Family Counseling	\$1,233	\$543	\$0
Birth Mother Expenses	\$3,834	\$4,274	\$0
Foster Care	\$230	\$38	\$0
Travel Expenses	\$1,870	\$2,285	\$521
All Other Expenses	\$4,108	\$2,488	\$761
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$34,012</b>	<b>\$30,222</b>	<b>\$2,253</b>

*Source:* Adoptive Families, “Cost of Adoption Update: 2010–2011,” <http://www.adoptivefamilies.com/articles.php?aid=2350>.

International adoptions have more than tripled in the past 30 years,<sup>41</sup> and then doubled in the last decade.<sup>42</sup>

Given such growth, international adoption has become big business. Families need preadoptive evaluations for the children and assessments (home studies) for themselves. Once children are placed, there are postadoption screenings, follow-up visits, the potential to become part of a research project, and participation in training and support groups. Approximately 25 private clinics have been created across the United States to provide these services. These centers generate revenue by charging adoptive families, with some of the fees covered by insurance and others requiring out-of-pocket expenditures.<sup>43</sup> But these costs are

<sup>41</sup>Groza et al., “Overview of Adoption.”

<sup>42</sup>Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, “Research: Adoption Facts,” 2013, accessed August 28, 2013, <http://www.adoptioninstitute.org/research/internationaladoption.php>.

<sup>43</sup>Groza et al., “Overview of Adoption.”

**Table 11.4 Average International Adoption Cost**

	China	Ethiopia	Russia	South Korea	Ukraine
Home Study Fee	\$2,052	\$2,107	\$1,923	\$2,178	\$1,886
Document Preparation/ Authentication	\$2,214	\$1,769	\$3,258	\$1,472	\$1,272
Adoption Agency Application and Program Fees	\$7,652	\$11,988	\$22,173	\$16,675	\$6,143
In-Country Adoption Expenses	\$5,581	\$1,979	\$6,709	\$9,007	\$13,946
Child's Passport, Visa, Medical Exam, and Other Fees	\$716	\$837	\$1,431	\$888	\$1,021
Postadoption Expenses	\$1,576	\$1,150	\$1,684	\$1,775	\$767
Major Travel Expenses	\$7,181	\$7,852	\$14,748	\$5,577	\$9,614
In-Country Travel Expenses	\$2,704	\$1,080	\$6,709	\$583	\$2,386
All Other Expenses	\$2,125	\$5,363	\$7,569	\$8,533	\$5,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$31,801</b>	<b>\$34,125</b>	<b>\$66,204</b>	<b>\$46,688</b>	<b>\$42,035</b>

*Source:* Adoptive Families, “Cost of Adoption Update: 2010–2011,” <http://www.adoptivefamilies.com/articles.php?aid=2350>.

out of range for many would-be adoptive parents with lower incomes or limited resources. “Given that the lives of many international adoptees are medically and developmentally complicated these clinics have carved a niche in the service delivery system for meeting the needs of international adoptive families who can access them.”<sup>44</sup> Some countries make it easier for prospective parents from the United States to adopt. Table 11.5 shows the 10 most popular countries for international adoption in 2011.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 444–445.

<sup>45</sup>Carrie Craft, *What Were the Top 20 Countries Being Adopted From in 2011?* accessed November 19, 2013, <http://adoption.about.com/od/supportresources/f/What-Were-The-Top-20-Countries-Being-Adopted-From-In-2011.htm>.

**Table 11.5 Top 10 Most Popular Countries for International Adoption, 2011**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of Adoptions to the U.S.</b>
China	2,589
Ethiopia	1,727
Russia	970
South Korea	736
Ukraine	632
Philippines	230
India	228
Columbia	216
Uganda	207
Taiwan	205

While international adoption is a business, so are domestic adoptions arranged privately. Domestic adoptions generally have paid intermediaries, attorneys, and sometimes the birth mothers receive compensation for medical care and other expenses. The adoptive families are not eligible for any government aid to defray their expenses. In contrast, families adopting children through departments of social services or private agencies that have subcontracts for placing children coming out of the foster care system receive monthly stipends and medical care for their children. In other words, the government has decided that these families receive special financial support for their efforts.

The costs of international and privately arranged adoptions raise fundamental ethical and fairness questions, though so far social workers as a group haven't formally responded. Is there something unfair about U.S. middle-class and wealthy families paying large sums to adopt babies or toddlers from overseas, while families with fewer resources generally end up adopting older children from public agencies? With more than 100,000 U.S. children ranging from infants to older adolescents needing adoptive families, and roughly 20,000 young people exiting foster care annually in this country without being adopted, is there need for greater equity in the overall system of adoptions?

Such questions are particularly important given the backgrounds of the U.S. children needing adoptive families: Their ethnicities include White (40%), African American (28%), and Hispanic origin (22%).<sup>46</sup> As might be expected, the exporting of children from one country

<sup>46</sup>AdoptUSKids, "Meet the Children," accessed August 29, 2013, <http://www.adoptuskids.org/meet-the-children>.

to another is fraught with risks for children, and birth and adoptive families. The Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption (so named because it was signed in the city that is the parliamentary and governmental center of the Netherlands) is a multilateral treaty approved by 66 nations on May 29, 1993. Inspired by the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, it set standards to protect the rights of children and their birth and adoptive parents.

Prior to the Convention, there were absolutely no regulations for international adoptions, resulting in children being treated as commodities for sale and being at risk for trafficking. Although the Convention has been seen as providing significant protections, it also has sparked considerable criticism, including the increased bureaucracy that raises costs for families, and child placement delays due to additional paperwork. Critics also complain that prospective adoptive families must be sought in-country first, although many nations lack the resources or will to meet that goal, which further lengthens the time children remain in limbo waiting to be placed.<sup>47</sup>

The impact of the Hague Convention is yet to be determined on a large scale. Given that all international adoptions entail exchange of money for children—even when there are more stringent controls—are such transactions ultimately in the best interests of most of those children?

## Post-9/11 and the Rise of Progressivism

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### The War on Terror

After the 9/11 attacks on the United States, fighting terrorism became the global mission for President George W. Bush and his administration, leading to the war in Afghanistan and in 2003, the invasion of Iraq. The huge financial impact of those wars—and the accompanying shift in Washington's focus to the Middle East—increasingly trumped social concerns about affordable housing, growing income inequality, and other domestic ills. Even now, just trying to gauge the precise cost of those twin conflicts prompts uncertainty and controversy among military experts, budget officials, and others. Depending on how overall direct and indirect war expenses are computed—and whether interest costs on money the United States borrowed to pay the bill are included—the total is estimated to range from about \$1 trillion to more than \$3 trillion through 2013. The initial years of those expenditures, combined with deep tax cuts proposed by the White House and supported by Congress, pushed the federal deficit to record highs by the time President Bush left office. Taking into account lifetime medical expenses for wounded veterans and extensive repairs to a military force

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<sup>47</sup>Groza et al, "Overview of Adoption," 437.

depleted by over a decade of continuous combat, a new study estimates that the eventual cost to taxpayers will be in the range of \$4 to \$6 trillion.<sup>48</sup>

Domestically, the Bush administration's emphasis on security led to creation of the cabinet-level Department of Homeland Security (DHS); one of its goals was to ratchet up enforcement of immigration policies. DHS has overseen construction of a high-tech barrier along the southwestern border of the United States. This includes fencing for pedestrians and vehicles, and a virtual "electronic" fence intended to provide video and other types of surveillance to reduce the number of undocumented immigrants entering the country. The still-unfinished project, which has run into major technical snafus and budget overruns, has stalled badly. Nevertheless, it symbolizes the post-9/11 "get tough" approach to immigrants, along with Washington's seeming disregard of criticism from human rights groups.

Shortly after the tragedies of 9/11, Congress, at the urging of the Bush administration, passed the so-called Patriot Act, which gave the federal government greater leeway to access personal medical records, tax records, phone records, and library records.<sup>49</sup> The American Civil Liberties Union objected strongly on the grounds that the law gave agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), as well as DHS investigators, authority to conduct searches without formal warrants. Taken together, the law's wide-ranging provisions vastly expanded the power of the federal government over the private life of residents of the United States.<sup>50</sup>

By the summer and fall of 2008, with voters increasingly convinced that the Republican-championed Iraq war was ill-conceived and the country needed new direction, Barack Obama, the junior Democratic senator from Illinois, waged an aggressive bid to win the White House. Among other things, he proposed a middle-class tax cut but proposed effectively raising tax rates on the wealthiest Americans. Seeking to reduce income inequality, candidate Obama also called for rolling back payroll taxes for low-income Americans. More broadly, his candidacy stoked renewed public debate and interest in recommitting government to protect the less fortunate and step up funding for health care, education, and other domestic priorities.

In 2013, some of the unprecedented power granted to intelligence agencies resulted in a scandal that forced Congress and the White House to reexamine electronic snooping programs. Edward Snowden, a lone whistleblower and former intelligence analyst, leaked

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<sup>48</sup>Ernesto Londoño, "Iraq, Afghan Wars Will Cost to \$4 Trillion to \$6 Trillion, Harvard Study Says," March 28, 2013, *The Washington Post*, [http://articles.washingtonpost.com/20130328/world/38097452\\_1\\_iraq-price-tag-first-gulf-war-veterans](http://articles.washingtonpost.com/20130328/world/38097452_1_iraq-price-tag-first-gulf-war-veterans).

<sup>49</sup>U.S. Congress, "H.R. 3162" (The USA PATRIOT Act), October 24, 2001, <http://epic.org/privacy/terrorism/hr3162.html>.

<sup>50</sup>American Civil Liberties Union, "Safe and Free: USA PATRIOT Act," November 14, 2003, <http://www.aclu.org/safefree/resources/17343res20031114.html>.

scores of highly classified documents to the media; they outlined the extent of previously secret electronic surveillance programs and domestic telephone tracking efforts affecting citizens—sometimes in violation of U.S. laws.

## The Elections of President Obama

Using the campaign theme of hope, the 47-year-old with an African father, a White mother, and a Muslim middle name, Barack Hussein Obama succeeded in doing something that would have been unthinkable barely a generation before: He became the 44th president of the United States. With 53% of the popular vote, and a relative wide electoral edge, Obama had a bigger margin of victory than George Herbert Walker Bush, Bill Clinton, or George W. Bush. During his inaugural address, looking over more than 1.8 million people jammed around the Capitol and the National Mall to witness the historic occasion, President Obama talked about tackling a “badly weakened” economy and helping voters suffering from “a sapping of confidence.”

Within a year of Obama’s election, a conservative, populist, social, and political movement emerged. Labeled the Tea Party, its name was coined by a television commentator who likened Obama’s mortgage relief plan to the Boston Tea Party of 1773 (in which colonists protested taxation without representation). The new movement opposed excessive taxation and government intervention in the private sector, supported stronger immigration controls, and praised the virtues of the free market economy. Some people (known as “Birthers”) joined the movement claiming that Obama had been born outside the United States and was thus not eligible to serve as president.

The 2010 midterm elections saw the Republicans gain enough seats to take control of the House and reduce the Democratic majority in the Senate. Many observers credited this performance to the Tea Party. Over the next 2 years the Republicans made efforts to bring Tea Party supporters into the fold, which included opposition to a United Nations resolution that promoted sustainable growth (Agenda 21), which some Tea Party activists believed represented a U.N. plot to subvert American sovereignty.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup>Michael Ray, “Tea Party Movement,” in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, accessed August 28, 2013, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1673405/Tea-Party-movement>.



President Obama and family

SOURCE: AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais

Despite an arguably weaker economy, perniciously high unemployment, and other persistent woes buffeting the country, President Obama was reelected. His popular vote margin was cut roughly in half, but the victory was remarkable nevertheless, partly because the campaign focused on traditional domestic and foreign policy matters—without the candidate's race ever emerging as an explicit issue.

What do the elections of Barack Obama mean about racism and discrimination in the United States? Some optimists proclaim that it signifies the beginning of what could be postracial America—a chastened country trying to fashion a new narrative of inclusion and opportunity for previously oppressed groups. A more pessimistic view posits that President Obama's victories primarily should be seen as a monumental personal achievement, which won't necessarily translate into sweeping social gains or resonate in other areas where White dominance has been the norm.

President Obama represents a multiethnic background: He had an African father and a White mother and spent part of his childhood in an Asian, predominantly Muslim country. Obama has stepped out of the “racial contract theory,” claiming multiple identities as a global leader, while acknowledging his cultural roots. He also displays an ease with his diverse ethnic background that increasingly characterizes 21st century America.

How has the meaning of Whiteness changed as a result of these elections? While Whiteness still carries privilege in many of the same ways it did before, there has been a clear decline in the cultural presumptions of White dominance in political affairs that may or may not resonate to other areas of social life.<sup>52</sup>

Economic and social justice will not automatically follow President Obama's latest victory. Yet there seems little doubt that something has shifted in the tectonic plates that shaped ethnic relationships since the 18th century, onward in spite of the successes of the civil rights movement and the ascendancy of the African American middle class from which Obama and his wife come. Whiteness means less than it did, and being African American inescapably means something different as a result of Obama's election. Whether this will translate into broader social gains is yet to be seen.

Racism continues to batter economically marginalized persons of color, but the oppressive narratives that used to be attached to ethnicity have shifted. Other successful African Americans have transcended racial boundaries—media celebrity Oprah Winfrey and former U.S. secretary of state, General Colin Powell, for example—by not emphasizing their ethnic differences and by allowing Whites to admire them without having to fundamentally change their stereotypes about African

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<sup>52</sup>Hua Hsu, “The End of White America?” *Atlantic Monthly* 303 (January/February 2009): 46–56.



Americans.<sup>53</sup> Is Barack Obama one of these non-ethnically identified celebrities? Or is he a transformational figure who can reshape our image of ourselves and each other?

It seems premature to conclude that President Obama is a transformational figure. Political victories aren't enough to end many years of racial enmity. Whiteness still carries privilege in many of the same ways it did before. But already, there has been a clear decline in the cultural presumption of White dominance in political affairs, even as it's unclear what the broader impact will be on other areas of social life.

Because President Obama generated overwhelming support among those who voted for the first time, most under the age of 30, and won a second term in office, this suggests that he may represent the future face of American political and cultural possibilities. We are not yet a post-racial nation, though we aspire to be. We still live within the categories of domination and privilege that we have inherited from previous generations. Rather than turning its back on ethnic differences, the United States may have crossed a bridge to a future where ethnicity matters less.

## ● ● ● PROFILES IN LEADERSHIP ● ● ●

### Nelson Mandela, 1918–2013



Nelson Mandela

SOURCE: Corbis.

Nelson Mandela was born in South Africa in 1918. His father was a relatively wealthy man, rich enough to maintain four wives and 13 children. Mandela was the youngest child in the family. He attended a mission school as a child where his education was influenced by standard British textbooks. As he matured, he realized that most textbooks he had studied recognized only White leaders, whereas Africans were described as savages and thieves. This awareness of the negative depiction of Africans in the literature fueled his commitment to fight for social justice and social change.

Mandela attended educational institutions at University College of Fort Hare and the University of the Witwatersrand, receiving a degree in law in 1942. His education as well as his earlier Methodist teaching greatly influenced his spiritual values.

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<sup>53</sup>Marc Ambinder, "Race Over?" *The Atlantic* 303 (January/February 2009): 62–66.

(Continued)

As a young man, Mandela developed a reputation as a radical, joining the African National Congress (ANC) in 1944. By the late 1940s, Mandela had become a significant public figure occupying key positions in the main African political movement of the period. During the late 1940s, White Afrikaner nationalism had emerged, emphasizing racial separation and segregation and instituting other racist policies such as restricting the movement of Africans into city areas, putting African schools under state control, banning interracial marriage, limiting voting rights for Africans, and requiring African women to carry passes to travel to urban areas. This evoked massive civil disobedience, and Mandela himself was arrested several times. Riots and strikes by workers also followed.

By this time, Mandela was heavily involved with the ANC as a leader and strategist and was committed to nonviolence as the most effective protest strategy. In 1956 Mandela was put on trial for treason for engaging in acts of resistance against the apartheid policies of the South African ruling party. He was acquitted in 1961.

In 1960 in Sharpeville, 30 policemen fired into a crowd of 5,000 people, killing 69 people and wounding nearly 200 others. Mandela and others organized protest activities. Warrants were issued for his arrest, leading him to flee the country. At this time the South African government banned the African National Congress, and Mandela decided armed resistance would be necessary for the success of the movement. Eventually he was arrested and convicted of plotting to overthrow the government by violent means. From August 1964 to 1990, Mandela was in prison. He was isolated on Robben Island, off Cape Town, for 17 of those 25 years. In spite of his isolation in a prison cell, Mandela had many visitors and much written communication from the outside world. During his imprisonment Mandela's reputation grew steadily. He became the symbol of resistance to apartheid in South Africa. During his prison time, Mandela was deprived of both daylight and music, at great cost to him. He never wavered from his political beliefs during the long dark years of his imprisonment.

By the 1980s, the government began to institute a series of reforms abolishing most of the most repressive policies and laws. Calls came from political leaders of other countries to release Mandela. He was moved to more comfortable quarters. He also began a series of discussions with government leaders regarding reforms and was eventually released from prison in 1990.

In 1991 Mandela was elected president of the African National Congress, the opposition party in South Africa. In 1993, Mandela received the Nobel Prize for Peace. In 1994 he was

elected president of South Africa. His administration addressed poverty and health problems in the country, especially among the long-oppressed African population. Nelson Mandela became an international hero for fighting racial and social injustice. His stoicism and courage during his long years of imprisonment continue to be inspirational to a new generation of activists across the globe.

## Conclusion

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The aim of this book has been to illuminate the root causes of common social problems and the policies that attempt to improve them, while exploring how social policies in the United States can be transformed to promote social justice for all groups. Common American social ideologies with roots in early U.S. principles, but transformed over recent decades to cope with sweeping societal changes have been presented. The benefits and drawbacks of globalization have been considered. The text has also highlighted how social workers have the critical role as advocates for change.

The six major principles of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) *Code of Ethics* are: being competent, having dignity, having integrity, believing in the value of human relationships, providing service, and advocating for social justice.<sup>54</sup> Within the advocacy component of the code are “principles of humanistic social work.” Two of these principles include “opposing injustice and promoting empowerment and equal access,” and “advocating for environments conducive to social justice.”<sup>55</sup>

At the core of the social work profession is an insight about the socially constructed nature of our economic and social arrangements, as well as a deep commitment to embrace the struggle to change unjust policies. By understanding the historical origins of U.S. policies, their relationship to economic well-being, and their complicity with the country’s legacy of discrimination, oppression, and prejudice, social workers have a vital role: leading the way to transform unjust policies into ones that hold the promise of social justice for everyone.

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<sup>54</sup>National Association of Social Workers, *Code of Ethics* (Washington, DC: NASW Press, 2009).

<sup>55</sup>Beth Glover Reed and Amanda J. Lehning, “Educating Social Work Students About Social Justice Practice,” in Michael J. Austin, ed., *Social Justice and Social Work—Rediscovering a Core Value of the Profession* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014), 368.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. What policies should the United States adopt with respect to immigration from the Global South?
2. What policies should the United States adopt to stop human trafficking as well as provide rescue and restore services?
3. Should the United States do more to help orphaned and poor children in other countries remain in their countries, or continue to promote international adoption?
4. Why do adoptive parents pay thousands of dollars for children from other countries but receive stipends and medical care for abused and neglected children coming from our country's child welfare system?
5. How did the policies of the George W. Bush administration lead to the rise of progressivism?
6. What are your expectations for the next 4 years in terms of social policy change? Which factors could encourage social policies that promote social justice and which ones may discourage them?
7. In your opinion has the United States entered a period of sustained progressive social change? Why or why not?
8. In what ways has your understanding of social and economic justice changed and what actions might you take as a result, especially in keeping with the six major principles of the *NASW Code of Ethics*?