Chapter Seven: Global Stratification

Learning Objectives

- Identify the different systems of social stratification.
- Characterize Karl Marx and Max Weber’s concept of social class.
- Describe the functionalist view of universal social stratification. Find some of its criticisms.
- Understand the conflict perspective of universal social stratification.
- Discuss the convergence of functionalist and conflict views. Identify the ways in which elites maintain stratification.
- List the main characteristics of social stratification in Great Britain and in the former Soviet Union.
- Compare and contrast the system of stratification in the Most Industrialized Nations and the Industrializing Nations and the Least Industrialized Nations.
- Analyze how global stratification came about; discuss colonialism, world system theory, and culture of poverty.
- Explore how global stratification is maintained; explain the impact of neocolonialism and the role of multinational corporations.
- Identify the changes that are occurring in global stratification.

Chapter Summary

Social stratification is the division of large numbers of people into layers according to their relative power, property, and prestige. It applies to both nations and to people within a nation, society, or other group. Although they may differ as to which system of social stratification they employ, all societies stratify their members. In addition, gender is a basis for stratifying people in every society of the world. The four major systems of social stratification are slavery, caste, estate, and class.

Slavery is defined as a form of social stratification in which some people own other people. It has been common in world history with references to slavery being made in the Old Testament, the Koran, and Roman and Greek history. Slavery was usually based on debt, as a punishment for a crime, or a matter of war. Racism was not associated with slavery until southern plantation owners developed a new ideology to justify their enslavement of Africans in the seventeenth century. Today, slavery is known to be practiced in the Sudan, Mauritania, Niger and the Ivory Coast. The enslavement of children for work in sex is a problem in Africa, Asia, and South America.

The caste system is a form of social stratification based on ascribed status that follows an individual throughout his or her life. India provides the best example of a caste system. Based on religion, India’s caste system has existed for almost three thousand years. Although the Indian government formally abolished the caste system in 1949, it still remains a respected aspect of Indian tradition and is strictly followed by a significant portion of the population.
In the class system, social stratification is based on the possession of money or material possessions. A major characteristic of the class system is that it allows social mobility, or movement up and down the class ladder.

Another method by which all societies stratify their members is by gender. Cutting across all systems of stratification, these gender divisions universally favor males over females.

Karl Marx and Max Weber disagreed on the meaning of social class in industrialized societies. According to Marx, people’s relationship to the means of production is the sole factor in determining their social class. They either belong to the bourgeoisie (those who owned the means of production) or the proletariat (those who work for the owners). According to Weber, Marx’s typology is too limiting because social class, as well as people’s social class standing, consists of three interrelated components: property, prestige, and power.

Although all sociologists agree that social stratification is universal, they disagree as to why it is universal. The functionalist view of social stratification, developed by Kingsley Davis and Wilbert Moore, concludes that stratification is inevitable because society must make certain that its positions are filled; ensure that the most qualified people fill the most important positions; and finally, to motivate the most qualified individuals to fill the most important positions, society must offer them the greatest reward to fill the most important positions.

Melvin Tumin identified three problems with the functionalist view: first, how does one determine which positions are more important than others? Second, to what degree are societies really meritocracies (promoting people on the basis of their achievements)? Third, if social stratification is so functional, why is it dysfunctional for so many?

Conflict theorists contend that conflict, not function, is the basis of social stratification. Italian sociologist Gaetano Mosca argued that in every society groups compete for power. The groups that gain power use that power to manipulate, control, and exploit the groups “beneath them.” Members of the ruling elite in every society develop ideologies that justify their society’s social stratification system. By dominating their society’s major social institutions and, thereby, controlling information and ideas, members of the ruling elite are able to socialize other group members into accepting their “proper places” in the social order. Marx believed the elite maintained their position at the top of the stratification system by seducing the oppressed into believing their welfare depended on keeping society stable. Gerhard Lenski suggested the key to understanding stratification is based on the accumulation of surplus.

Depending on the political climate and resources available to those in power and those who are ruled, the stratification system is maintained by various means. These means include controlling ideas, information, criticism, and technology, and the use of force. The use of force is the least efficient.

Stratification is universal, although the methods for stratification vary from culture to culture. Two examples of how stratification differs are illustrated by social stratification in Great Britain.
and the former Soviet Union. In Britain, the most striking features of the class system are differences in speech (including accents) and education. In the former Soviet Union, communism resulted in one set of social classes being replaced by another. The nations of the world can be divided into three categories, using the extent of industrialization as a basis for stratification. This results in a triadic division of the Most Industrialized Nations, Industrializing Nations, and Least Industrialized Nations. Just as every society stratifies its member, the nations of the world are also stratified with the most industrialized nations controlling most of the world’s wealth and resources. Three theories explain the origins of global stratification: colonialism, world system theory, and the culture of poverty.

According to those who attribute stratification to colonialism, those countries that industrialized first had an advantage over other countries and, in turn, colonized them, exploiting their labor and natural resources. World system theory, developed by conflict theorist Immanuel Wallerstein, suggests that the world is divided between core nations (most developed economies), semi-peripheral nations (developing economies), peripheral nations (least developed economies), and external areas (not included in the development of capitalism and industrialization). Economist John Kenneth Galbraith proposed that the poor, whether in the United States or abroad, hold cultural values and beliefs that limit their own economic growth. There is a tendency among sociologists to reject the culture of poverty belief because it places blame on the individual and downplays the importance of capitalism.

We are currently living through a time of cataclysmic economical and political changes. In an attempt to stabilize things, global powers have pumped trillions of dollars into their economic-political systems. We don’t know the end point of this current strain in the global system. As this process of realignment continues, however, it is likely to sweep all of us into its unwelcome net.

**Chapter Outline**

I. **Systems of Social Stratification**
   A. Social stratification is a system in which groups of people are divided into layers according to their relative power, property, and prestige.
   B. Every society stratifies its members and in every society of the world, gender is a basis for stratifying people.
   C. Slavery is a form of social stratification in which some people own other people.
      1. Initially, slavery was based on debt, punishment for violation of the law, or defeat in battle.
      2. Gerda Lerna notes that women were the first people enslaved through warfare. They were valued for sexual purposes, reproduction, and their labor.
      3. Slavery could be temporary or permanent and was not necessarily passed on to one’s children. Typically, slaves owned no property and had no power; however, this was not universally true.
      4. To meet the growing need for labor, some colonists tried to enslave Native Americans, but this attempt failed miserably.
5. The colonists then turned to Africans, who were being brought to North and South America by the British, Dutch, English, Portuguese, and Spanish.

6. When American slave owners found it was profitable to own slaves for life, they developed beliefs to justify what they wanted and to make slavery inheritable. That is, the slaves’ children could be sold, bartered, or traded. The practice of slavery was written into law.

7. Slavery is still practiced in certain parts of the world today. Although their governments have made slavery illegal, the slave trade has been revived in Sudan and Mauritania. The enslavement of children for work and sex is also a problem in Africa, Asia, and South America.

D. In a caste system, status is determined by birth and is lifelong.
1. Ascribed status is the basis of a caste system. Caste societies try to make certain that boundaries between castes remain firm by practicing endogamy (marriage within their own group) and developing rules about ritual pollution, teaching that contact with inferior castes contaminates the superior caste.
2. Although abolished by the Indian government in 1949, the caste system remains part of everyday life in India, as it has for almost 3,000 years. This system is based on religion and is made up of four main castes which are subdivided into thousands of specialized subcastes or jati. The lowest caste, the Dalit, are known as the “untouchables.” If higher castes are contaminated by “the untouchables” then an ablation (washing rituals) is required, to restore purity.
3. An American racial caste system developed in the United States when slavery ended. Even in the earlier parts of this century, all whites were considered to have a higher status than all African Americans and separate accommodations were maintained for the races in the South.

E. A class system is a form of social stratification based primarily on the possession of money or material possessions.
1. Initial social class position is based on that of one’s parents (ascribed status).
2. With relatively fluid boundaries, a class system allows for social mobility, or movement up or down the social class ladder, based on achieved status.

F. No matter what system a society may use to divide people into different layers, gender is always an essential part of those distinctions within each layer. On the basis of gender, people are sorted into categories and given differential access to rewards. Social distinctions have always favored males. In every society, men’s earnings are higher than women’s and most of the world’s illiterate are women.

G. The growing interconnectedness among the world’s wealthiest people has produced a global superclass, one in which wealth and power are more concentrated than ever before.

II. What Determines Social Class?
A. According to Karl Marx, social class is determined by one’s relationship to the means of production—the tools, factories, land, and investment capital used to produce wealth.
1. The bourgeoisie (capitalists) own the means of production; the proletariat (workers) works for those who own the means of production.
2. While Marx recognized the existence of other groups—farmers and peasants, a lumpenproletariat, and self-employed professionals—he did not consider these groups social classes because they lacked class consciousness.

3. As capital becomes more concentrated, the two classes will become increasingly hostile to one another.

4. Class consciousness, or an awareness of a common identity based on position in the means of production, will develop; it is the essential basis of the unity of workers, according to Marx.

5. Marx believed that the workers would revolt against the capitalists, take control of the means of production, and usher in a classless society. However, the workers’ unity and revolution are held back by false class consciousness—the mistaken identification of workers with the interests of capitalists.

B. Unlike Marx, Max Weber did not believe that property was the sole basis of a person’s position in the stratification system, but rather that property, prestige, and power determine social class.

1. Property (or wealth) is an essential element; however, powerful people, like managers of corporations, control the means of production, although they do not own them.

2. Power is the ability to control others, even over their objections.

3. Prestige may be derived from ownership of property; however, it also may be based on other factors, such as athletic skills.

III. Why is Social Stratification Universal?

A. According to the functionalist view expressed by Kingsley Davis and Wilbert Moore, stratification is inevitable for the following four reasons:

1. Society must make certain that its important positions are filled; some positions are more important than others; more important positions need to be filled by the more qualified people, and these people must be offered greater rewards.

B. Melvin Tumin was the first to present a number of criticisms to the Davis and Moore thesis.

1. He asked how the importance of a position is measured (e.g., “Is a surgeon really more important to society than a garbage collector?”). Rewards cannot be used to measure the importance of a job; there must be some independent measure of importance.

2. He noted that if stratification worked as Davis and Moore describe it, society would be a meritocracy, a form of social stratification in which all positions are awarded on the basis of merit, but it does not work this way (e.g., the best predictor of college entrance is family income, not ability).

3. Finally, he noted that stratification is dysfunctional to many people, thus not functional.

C. Conflict theorists stress that conflict, not function, is the basis of social stratification. Every society has only limited resources to go around, and in every society, groups struggle with one another for those resources.

1. Gaetano Mosca argued that it is inevitable that society will be stratified by power. Society cannot exist unless it is organized; thus, there must be leadership in order
to coordinate people’s actions. Leadership requires inequalities of power because some people take leadership positions and others follow. It is human nature to be self-centered; thus, people in positions of power use their positions to bring greater rewards to themselves.

2. Marx believed that human history is the history of class struggle; those in power use society’s resources to benefit themselves and oppress others. He predicted that workers would one day revolt against their oppression.

3. Modern conflict theorists stress that conflict between capitalists and workers is not the only important conflict in contemporary society, but rather, groups within the same class compete for scarce resources, resulting in conflict between many groups (e.g., young vs. old; women vs. men).

D. Gerhard Lenski offered a synthesis between functionalist and conflict theories.
   1. Functionalists are right when it comes to societies that have only basic resources and do not accumulate wealth, such as hunting and gathering societies.
   2. Conflict theorists are right when it comes to societies with a surplus. In such societies humans pursue self-interests and struggle to control those surpluses. This leads to the emergence of a small elite who then builds inequality into the society, resulting in a full-blown system of social stratification.

IV. How Do Elites Maintain Stratification?
   A. Social stratification is maintained within a nation by elites who control ideas and information, and use force.
      1. In Medieval Europe, the divine right of kings ideology was developed to control the commoners. This ideology says that the king’s authority comes from God and therefore he and his representatives must be obeyed. This was more effective than coercion, which breeds hostility and lays the ground for rebellion.
      2. Elites also control information in order to maintain their position of power.
      3. Fear is a common tactic among the elite.
      4. Technology, especially monitoring devices, helps the elite maintain its position, but also makes it more difficult for them to control information.
   B. Underlying the maintenance of stratification is control of social institutions, such as the legal establishment, the police, and the military.

V. Comparative Social Stratification
   A. Great Britain’s class system can be divided into upper, middle, and lower classes. Great Britain’s population is about evenly divided between the middle class and the lower (working) class and about 1 percent of the population makes up the upper class. Language and speech patterns are important class indicators. Education is the primary way the class system is perpetuated from one generation to the next.
   B. The ideal of communism, a classless society, was never realized in the former Soviet Union. Instead, Lenin and Trotsky used the term socialism to describe the intermediate step between capitalism and communism, in which social classes are abolished but some inequality remains. The major basis of stratification was membership in the Communist party. However, frustration with how the West was thriving, led the Soviet leadership to initiate reforms, allowing elections and selling large amounts of state-
owned businesses to the public. As part of Russia’s transition to capitalism, authority broke down and a powerful Mafia emerged. This group of organized criminals is taking its place as part of Russia’s new capitalist class.

VI. Global Stratification: Three Worlds
A. Until recently, a simple model was used consisting of the First World (industrialized, capitalistic nations), Second World (communist—or socialist—nations), and Third World (any nations that didn’t fit the other categories). A more neutral way of categorizing nations is to use terms related to a nation’s level of industrialization: “Most Industrialized,” “Industrializing,” and “Least Industrialized.”
B. The Most Industrialized Nations (U.S., Canada, Great Britain, France, Germany, Switzerland, and other industrialized countries of western Europe, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand) are capitalistic, although variations exist in economic systems.
   1. These nations have only 16 percent of the world’s population, but have 31 percent of the world’s land.
   2. The poor in these nations live better/longer than the average citizens of the Least Industrialized Nations.
C. The Industrializing Nations include most of the nations of the former Soviet Union and its former satellites in eastern Europe.
   1. These nations account for 16 percent of the world’s population and 20 percent of the land.
   2. The dividing line between these nations and the Most Industrialized Nations is soft; consequently, it is difficult to classify some nations.
   3. The people of these nations have considerably lower income and a lower standard of living than people in the Most Industrialized Nations; while their access to electricity, indoor plumbing, and other material goods is more limited than those in the Most Industrialized Nations, it is higher than those in the Least Industrialized Nations.
D. In the Least Industrialized Nations of the world, most people live on farms or in villages with low standards of living.
   1. These nations account for 49 percent of the earth’s land and 68 percent of the world’s population.
   2. Most people in the Least Industrialized Nations are poor.
   3. Most of the world’s population growth occurs in these nations.

VII. How Did the World’s Nations Become Stratified?
A. The theory of colonialism focuses on how the nations that industrialized first got the jump on the rest of the world.
   1. With profits generated by the Industrial Revolution, industrialized nations built powerful armaments and fast ships and then invaded weaker nations, making colonies of them and exploiting their labor/natural resources. European nations tended to focus on Africa, while the United States concentrated on Central and South America.
2. Powerful European nations would claim a colony and then send their representatives in to run the government, while the United States chose to plant a corporate flag, letting the corporations dominate the territory’s government.

3. Colonialism shaped many of the Least Industrialized Nations. Often, the Most Industrialized Nations created states disregarding tribal or cultural considerations.

B. According to world system theory as espoused by Immanuel Wallerstein, countries are politically and economically tied together.
   1. There are four groups of interconnected nations: (1) core nations, those that industrialized first; (2) semi-periphery (Mediterranean area), highly dependent on trade with core nations; (3) periphery (eastern Europe), mainly limited to selling cash crops to core nations, with limited economic development; (4) external area (most of Africa/Asia) left out of growth of capitalism, with few economic ties to core nations.
   2. Globalization (the extensive interconnections among nations resulting from the expansion of capitalism) has been speeded up because of new forms of communication and transportation. The consequence is that no nation is able to live in isolation.

C. John Kenneth Galbraith argued that some nations remained poor because they were crippled by a culture of poverty, a way of life based on traditional values and religious beliefs that perpetuated poverty from one generation to the next and kept some of the Least Industrialized Nations from developing.

D. Most sociologists prefer colonialism and world system theory.
   1. The culture of poverty theory places the blame on the victim, focusing on the characteristics of poor nations rather than the structural arrangements that benefit some nations (the Most Industrialized Nations) at the expense of others (the Least Industrialized Nations).
   2. Each theory only partially explains global stratification.

VIII. Maintaining Global Stratification
A. Neocolonialism is the economic and political dominance of the Least Industrialized Nations by the Most Industrialized Nations.
   1. Michael Harrington asserts that the Most Industrialized Nations control the Least Industrialized Nations because they control markets, set prices, and so on.
   2. The Most Industrialized Nations sell weapons and manufactured goods to the Least Industrialized Nations on credit, turning these countries into eternal debtors. They use resources to pay off the debt, thereby preventing them from developing their own industrial capacity.

B. Multinational corporations contribute to exploitation of the Least Industrialized Nations.
   1. Some exploit the Least Industrialized Nations directly by controlling national and local politics, running them as a fiefdom.
   2. The Most Industrialized Nations are primary beneficiaries of profits made in the Least Industrialized Nations.
   3. They often work closely with the elite of the Least Industrialized Nations, many times in informal partnerships that are mutually beneficial.
4. In some situations, multinational corporations may bring prosperity to the Least Industrialized Nations because new factories provide salaries and opportunities that otherwise would not exist for workers in those countries.

C. The new technology favors the Most Industrialized Nations, enabling them to maintain their global domination.

1. The profits of multinational corporations can be invested in developing and acquiring the latest technology, thereby generating even greater profits.
2. Many of the Least Industrialized Nations do not have the resources to invest in new technology, creating an even greater gap between the levels of industrialization globally.
3. Global domination could be on the verge of a major shift from West to East.

IX. Strains in the Global System

A. We are currently living through a time of cataclysmic economical and political changes. In an attempt to stabilize things, global powers have pumped trillions of dollars into their economic-political systems.

B. We don’t know the end point of this current strain in the global system. As this process of realignment continues, however, it is likely to sweep all of us into its unwelcome net.

KEY TERMS

After studying the chapter, review the definition for each of the following terms.

bourgeoisie: Marx’s term for capitalists, those who own the means of production (p. 189)
caste system: a form of social stratification in which people’s statuses are determined by birth and are lifelong (p. 186)
class consciousness: Marx’s term for awareness of a common identity based on one’s position in the means of production (p. 190)
class system: a form of social stratification based primarily on the possession of money or material possessions (p. 188)
colonialism: the process by which one nation takes over another nation, usually for the purpose of exploiting its labor and natural resources (p. 201)
culture of poverty: the assumption that the values and behaviors of the poor make them fundamentally different from other people, that these factors are largely responsible for their poverty, and that parents perpetuate poverty across generations by passing these characteristics to their children (p. 206)
divine right of kings: the idea that the king’s authority comes from God (p. 194)
endogamy: the practice of marrying within one’s own group (p. 186)
false class consciousness: Marx’s term to refer to workers mistakenly thinking of themselves as capitalists (p. 190)
globalization of capitalism: the adoption of capitalism around the world (p. 204)
ideology: beliefs about the way things ought to be that justify social arrangements (p. 185)
means of production: the tools, factories, land, and investment capital used to produce wealth (p. 189)

meritocracy: a form of social stratification in which all positions are awarded on the basis of merit (p. 192)

multinational corporations: companies that operate across national boundaries (p. 207)

neocolonialism: the economic and political dominance of the Least Industrialized Nations by the Most Industrialized Nations (p. 206)

proletariat: Marx’s term for the exploited class, the mass of workers who do not own the means of production (p. 189)

slavery: a form of social stratification in which some people own other people (p. 184)

social mobility: movement up or down the social class ladder (p. 188)

social stratification: the division of large numbers of people into layers according to their relative power, property, and prestige (p. 184)

world system theory: theory that states that industrialization led to four groups of nations (p. 204)

KEY PEOPLE
Review the major theoretical contributions or findings of these people.

Kingsley Davis and Wilbert Moore: According to these functionalists, inequality is universal because it motivates the most qualified members of society to strive for the most important social positions. (pp. 191-192)

W. E. B. Du Bois: This sociologist wrote about slavery in the United States, noting that over time the South became committed to keeping African Americans in slavery and killing those who rebelled against this institution. (p. 186)

John Kenneth Galbraith: This economist argued that the Least Industrialized Nations remain poor because their own culture holds them back. (pp. 205-206)

Michael Harrington: Harrington saw that colonialism has been replaced by neocolonialism. (p. 206)

Martha Huggins: This sociologist investigated poverty in Brazil. (p. 200)

Gerhard Lenski: Lenski offered a synthesis of functionalist and conflict views of stratification which focused on surpluses that groups accumulate. (p. 194)

Gerda Lerner: This historian noted that women were the first people enslaved through warfare. (p. 185)

Oscar Lewis: This anthropologist was among the first to write about the culture of poverty. (pp. 205-206)
Karl Marx: Marx concluded that social class depended exclusively on the means of production; an individual’s social class was determined by whether or not he owned the means of production. (pp. 189-190, 193)

Gaetano Mosca: Mosca argued that every society is inevitably stratified by power. (p. 193)

Melvin Tumin: Tumin was the first to offer a criticism of the functionalist view on stratification. (p. 192)

Immanuel Wallerstein: This historian proposed a world system theory to explain global stratification. (p. 204)

Max Weber: Weber argued that social class was based on three components: property, prestige, and power (pp. 190-191)

Discussion Topics to Encourage Student Participation

- The text describes how all societies use gender as a form of stratification with the distinction always favoring males. Discuss how accurate this statement is in modern Western culture and what issues (other than only their sexual identification) affect the unfavorable stratification of women. In what combination does sex take on a greater significance as a means of stratification?

- Thinking about Max Weber’s three components of social class, ask your students to answer the following two questions: If you were forced to choose between Weber’s three components of social class, which component would you choose to have for the rest of your life: property, prestige, or power? Why?

- Considering the power of ideology, have your students discuss how liberal and conservative political ideologies are communicated, disseminated, and propagated? Which specific groups of people benefit the most from these ideologies and which benefit the least? Or is it about equal? Finally, what can those groups of people who benefit the least from these ideologies do to challenge and/or change these ideologies? In what ways, if any, are they doing just that?

- After reading “Thinking Critically–Open Season: Children as Prey,” have students discuss poverty in Brazil and death squads for children. Ask students if they think that the U.S. should get involved as we do in Africa with their AIDS and poverty problems, in southeast Asia with Tsunami relief, and in other parts of the world where terrorism is an ongoing threat to world peace.

- After reading “Thinking Critically—When Globalization Comes Home: Maquiladoras South of the Border,” discuss the impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement on the American worker. What are the intended international benefits of moving work to Mexico? Is the sacrifice of unemployed American workers justified by the creation of jobs in less fortunate countries when corporations relocate? What is the “bottom line” for corporations making this move and what are the benefits to other nations?
Classroom Activities and Student Projects

- Choosing six volunteers, organize a formal debate on why social stratification is universal. Ask three of the six volunteers to articulate the functionalist view of social stratification, and the other three the conflict theory’s view of social stratification. Students from both sides should anticipate the “other side’s” best arguments and be prepared to refute them. Specifically, ask the debating students to take a pro or con position on the following three points: first, social stratification is necessary for societies to exist and prosper; second, the United States functions, overall, as a meritocracy; and third, human beings—driven as they are by human nature—are incapable of ever creating and/or living in a classless society.

- As a take home assignment, have students evaluate the pros and cons of globalization. They should create a detailed list of each. Have them bring their lists back to class and trade papers with someone. Each student should critique both the pros and cons of the other student. Have the students return the papers and get into groups to discuss their thoughts on the items. Then the instructor will facilitate a class discussion to debate the potential globalization holds for world peace.

- Assign the following as a research paper: Choosing a country outside of the United States in which an oppressive condition exists, research and write about the following: What is the specific oppressive condition that exists in that country? Which groups of people in that country are most affected by this oppressive condition? How are they affected? What is the dominant religion of that country and what are their cultural values and beliefs? What are some of the contributing factors, both indigenous and international, that help account for this oppressive condition? What are people doing, both indigenously and internationally, to address, alleviate, and/or eliminate this oppressive condition? What are the people of that nation doing for themselves to address their problems? Finally, note how this “far away” oppressive condition might affect you, and what you can do to participate in the “struggle.”

Service Learning Projects and Field Trips

- Have the students make a list of groups (both faith-based and secular organizations) they see advertised on television or in magazines that advocate helping children. Have a committee of students make contact with these organizations by mail or e-mail to request additional information, including a description of the type of services they provide and of the specific areas in which they operate. After obtaining the information, have the students analyze it in an attempt to determine what percentage of every dollar collected is actually devoted to helping the disadvantaged children. What percentage of every dollar collected goes for administrative costs, advertising, and other expenses or “support service” that is not helping the needy directly? Do Christian or secular organizations seem to be more responsive and allocate a larger percentage of the money collected to helping children?

- Through the university’s speakers’ bureau, international relations office, or personal contacts of the instructor, find a member of the Hindu faith, preferably from India, to discuss how the
caste system operates. The speaker should address the traditional importance of the caste system and why it is still honored in many parts of India, even though the government officially abolished it over fifty years ago. The speaker should provide a brief overview of Hinduism as it relates to the caste system. Ask the speaker to explain which caste his family was in and if that has changed with the speaker coming to America.

- Working with the university’s director of international student programs, arrange a presentation by representatives from various countries that experience the major influence of United States corporations. Ask the students to comment on which American companies do business in their home country, the type of businesses they conduct, how much the local economy is dependent upon these businesses, and the contributions they make to the community. Ask them if life is better, worse, or about the same after U.S. corporations came to their country. Finally, ask them why they chose to come to the United States for their education and how it was funded.

**Suggested Films**

   A discussion about the influence of ads in the context of the consumer culture.

*Animal Farm.* Phoenix. 1957, 75 min. (16 mm).
   An animated film of George Orwell’s classic tale.

*Social Class.* Insight Media. 2009, 36 min. (DVD).
   This program defines social class, considers the significance of social class distinctions, and discusses the importance of social class in society; also explores the views of Weber and Marx on social class.