

THE GLOBALIZATION OF CULTURE

Implicit in the minor premise is an image of the historical development or evolution of culture. In its most simple formulation this image is captured in the diagram below designed to depict the structure of the cultural universe at two different points in time.

The diagram on the left depicts an era in which human culture was an aggregation of local cultures, each of which was linked to a particular territorial space and

was unrelated to the others. The diagram on the right depicts an era in which the structure of the cultural universe has dramatically changed. Now we observe a global culture whose territorial base is the whole planet and, indeed, to be accurate, that territorial base extends beyond the gravitational boundaries of the planet Earth to encompass a small segment of cosmic space.

This diagrammatic representation of the emergence of the global culture is excessively simplified. But for my

purpose here the diagram hopefully makes the point I wish to make. This point is that today most human beings live out their lives in a cocoon of culture whose circumference equals the circumference of the globe. In a word, there is a global culture. I now want to turn to another question: What are the historical trends and associated social processes that are producing a global culture? There appear to be two. One is increasing “interrelatedness” between societies. The other is increasing “congruence” among societies.

Citizenship and Education in a Global Age

CITIZENSHIP AND CITIZEN COMPETENCE IN A GLOBAL AGE

The progressive globalization of the human condition has far-reaching implications for citizenship and citizen competence . . . Specifically, I will be arguing that: The demands of citizenship in a global age call for the development of competencies that have not been traditionally emphasized by schools.

The Meaning of Citizenship

Citizenship refers to the decisions, the judgments, and the actions through which individuals link themselves—knowingly or unknowingly, deliberately and inadvertently—to the public affairs of the groups of which they are members. There are five elements of this formulation that need to be remarked upon.

First, note that this conception does not restrict citizenship to any one type of group such as a nation. To the contrary, this conception highlights the fact that individuals are citizens of all the groups in which they participate. Thus, a person can simultaneously be a citizen of such diverse groups as a family, a

labor union, a religious organization, a school, a profession, as well as a citizen of overlapping governmental communities like cities, states, and nations.

Second, note that just as citizenship is not restricted to a particular type of group, its exercise is not constricted by a narrow band of activities such as voting, obeying laws, paying taxes, serving on juries, etc. Rather, citizenship encompasses the full range of decisions, judgments, and actions through which indi-

viduals link themselves to the public affairs of the various groups in which they live out their lives.

Third, note that the exercise of citizenship can be unknowing and inadvertent as well as conscious and deliberate. For example, if I purchase a car that consumes a great deal of gas, and I am unaware of the relationship of this decision to the future supply and costs of energy, my decision in fact links me to the public affairs of society even though I am not aware of the linkage. This is a significant point to keep in mind. Citizenship is an inextricable part of human sociability. We never have the choice of whether to be or not to be a

