Globalization and the Contemporary World

I. Return to Debates on Modernization and Globalization

II. Case Study: Wal-Mart

III. A Flat World? Questions and Debates on Globalization
### Current Debates Over Modernization and Globalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proponents</th>
<th>Critics</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Modernization is inevitable.</td>
<td>- Modernization is western ideology imposed on the world.</td>
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<td>- Advances in science, technology and trade benefit global peoples.</td>
<td>- Advances in science, technology and trade inherently unequal.</td>
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<td>- Creates higher standard of living worldwide.</td>
<td>- Creates poverty and dependency among working poor worldwide.</td>
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<td>- Creates interconnected, interdependent world.</td>
<td>- Creates world class system.</td>
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Case Study: Wal-Mart

- Wal-Mart is a model for new global company.
- Multi-billion dollar consumer business utilizing “outsourced” cheaper labor in Asia and Latin America.
- Global supply chain. Look for cheapest location to produce consumer goods.
- Whole regions dependent on Wal-Mart production. Compete to produce for Wal-Mart.
- Wal-Mart determines specifications for production and location for production.
- U.S. stores can price lower for consumer goods. (Buyer-driven global economy)
Anti Wal-Mart Cartoon
A Flat World? Questions and Debates on Globalization

- Thomas Friedman’s *The World is Flat (2005)* inspired national debate on globalization.
- He argues that global competition creates “flat world” where U.S. companies and workers compete on more level playing field with the rest of the world.
- Is the world flattened or even more rigidly hierarchical by wealth?
- Who benefits by this global flattening? Who is hurt?
- Are cultural differences also flattened and are we heading for one “McAmerica” worldwide?
- What are the implications for U.S. jobs and U.S. prosperity?