

Where do your stuff come from?

Where do your clothes come from? Ninety-eight percent of the clothing sold in Europe or the United States is manufactured overseas. The world's leading clothing exporter is China, with 29 percent of the world market, followed by Mexico, India, Indonesia, and Bangladesh. One-third of all the socks in the world are manufactured in Datang, China, by workers making \$270 per month.

How do you connect to your friends? Via a smart- phone, tablet computer, or laptop? Nearly all of these are manufactured in Asia. How do you get to school or work? If you drive a car, at least part of it was made overseas. The market share of domestic U.S. auto brands, known as the "big three" fell below 50 percent in 2007. However, that statistic itself is misleading, because many of the cars sold by "foreign" manufacturers are in fact manufactured in the United States. Toyota's popular Camry is assembled in Georgetown, Kentucky; Honda's Accord is made in Marysville, Ohio (and in England, New Zealand, China, and Thailand). Even the cars made in the United States, however, contain components sourced from suppliers around the world. Automobile production is thus thoroughly globalized. To fuel that car (or bus), one needs fossil fuels of some type, and these too come from an industry that is thoroughly globalized. The world's largest oil exporters are Saudi Arabia, Russia, Iran (before sanctions took effect), the United Arab Emirates, and Norway. The largest importers are the United States, China, India, Japan, and Germany. Finally, consider what we eat.

Free trade agreements and decreased transportation costs have globalized the food trade, allowing food to be produced where the geographic conditions (soil, climate, etc.) are most beneficial. The search for tastier foodstuffs has driven much of colonialism and globalization over the past 500 years, which is why Indonesia was originally known as the Spice Islands and why Ricardo's original formulation of the theory of comparative advantage used the example of Portuguese wine (and British textiles).

The food trade allows people in mountainous Japan to consume wheat and beef grown in wide-open Kansas, people in landlocked Kansas to consume salmon, and People all over the northern hemisphere to consume fresh fruits and vegetables in the middle of winter. Our favorite indulgences, such as chocolate, tea, and coffee, are grown in a relatively small number of countries and exported around the world. In recent years, a "local food" movement has emerged in opposition to the expense and pollution involved in transporting so much food around the world, but it has had only a limited impact so far. If you live in the United States, Canada, or Europe, you might reasonably wonder "What do we still make here?" In part, the answer is "A lot

