



The Sociological Imagination

Mobile Phone

1



<http://youtu.be/0eUeL3n7fDs>

1



Population: (2011) 6.9 billion

Telephones – main lines in use (2008): 1.3 billion

Telephones~mobile cellular (2010) 5.3 billion

Internet users (2010) 2.1 billion



Core Concepts

- 1. Sociology is the scientific study of human activity in society. More specifically it is the study of the social forces that affect the things people do with and to one another.**

Core Concepts

- a) **Social forces: anything humans create that influence or pressure people to interact, behave, respond, or think in certain ways.**
- b) **The mobile phone is a human-created technology that has transformed or will transform every aspect of life.**

Core Concepts

2. The Sociological imagination is a quality of mind that allows people to see how remote and impersonal social forces shape their life story/biography.

Core Concepts

- a) **Biography:** all the day to day activities from birth to death that make up a person's life.
- b) **Sociological Imagination:** a point of view that allows us to identify seemingly remote and impersonal social forces and connect them to our biographies.
- c) **Social Facts:** ideas, feelings, and ways of behaving “that possess the remarkable property of existing outside the conscience of the individual” (Durkheim 1982, p.51)
- d) **Current of opinion:** the state of affairs with regard to some way of being.

Core Concepts

3. Sociologists distinguish between troubles, which can be resolved by changing the individual, and issues, which can be resolved only by addressing the social forces that created them.

Core Concepts

- a) **Troubles:** personal needs, problems, or difficulties that can be explained as individual shortcomings related to motivation, attitude, ability, character, or judgment. The resolution of a trouble, if it can indeed be resolved, lies in changing the individual in some way.
- b) **Issues:** matters that can be explained only by factors outside an individual's control and immediate environment.
- c) **Many people cannot see the intricate connection between their personal situations or troubles and the larger social forces.**

Core Concepts

4. **Sociology emerged in part as a reaction to the Industrial Revolution, an ongoing and evolving social force that transformed society, human behavior, and interaction in incalculable ways.**

Core Concepts

- a) The Industrial Revolution transformed virtually every aspect of society.
 - a) Changed how goods were produced and how people worked
 - b) Changed notions of time and space (development of railroad, running water, newspapers etc.)
 - c) Large amount of goods

Core Concepts

5. Early sociologists were witnesses to the transforming effects of the Industrial Revolution. They offered lasting conceptual frameworks for analyzing the ongoing social upheavals.

a) Auguste Comte, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Weber, W.E.B. Dubois and Jane Addams

Core Concepts

6. **A global perspective assumes that social interactions do not stop at political borders and that the most pressing social problems are part of a larger, global situation.**
 - a. **We are one large family that shares similar issues**

Core Concepts

7. The sociological perspective offers a framework that can be used to address work-related issues and tasks. Studying sociology also includes learning important career-oriented skills.

Global Society Theories

Global interdependence is a situation in which human interaction and social problems transcend national borders.

UPS is in 200+ countries

Serves 4 billion people

1.8 million packages delivered between countries each day that were sent by people in one country to people in another country



Globalization is the ever-increasing flow of goods, services, money, people, technology, etc. across political borders.

Example of globalization: UPS timeline

1907 UPS in
Seattle
Washington

1977 UPS in
all 50 states
and Canada
served

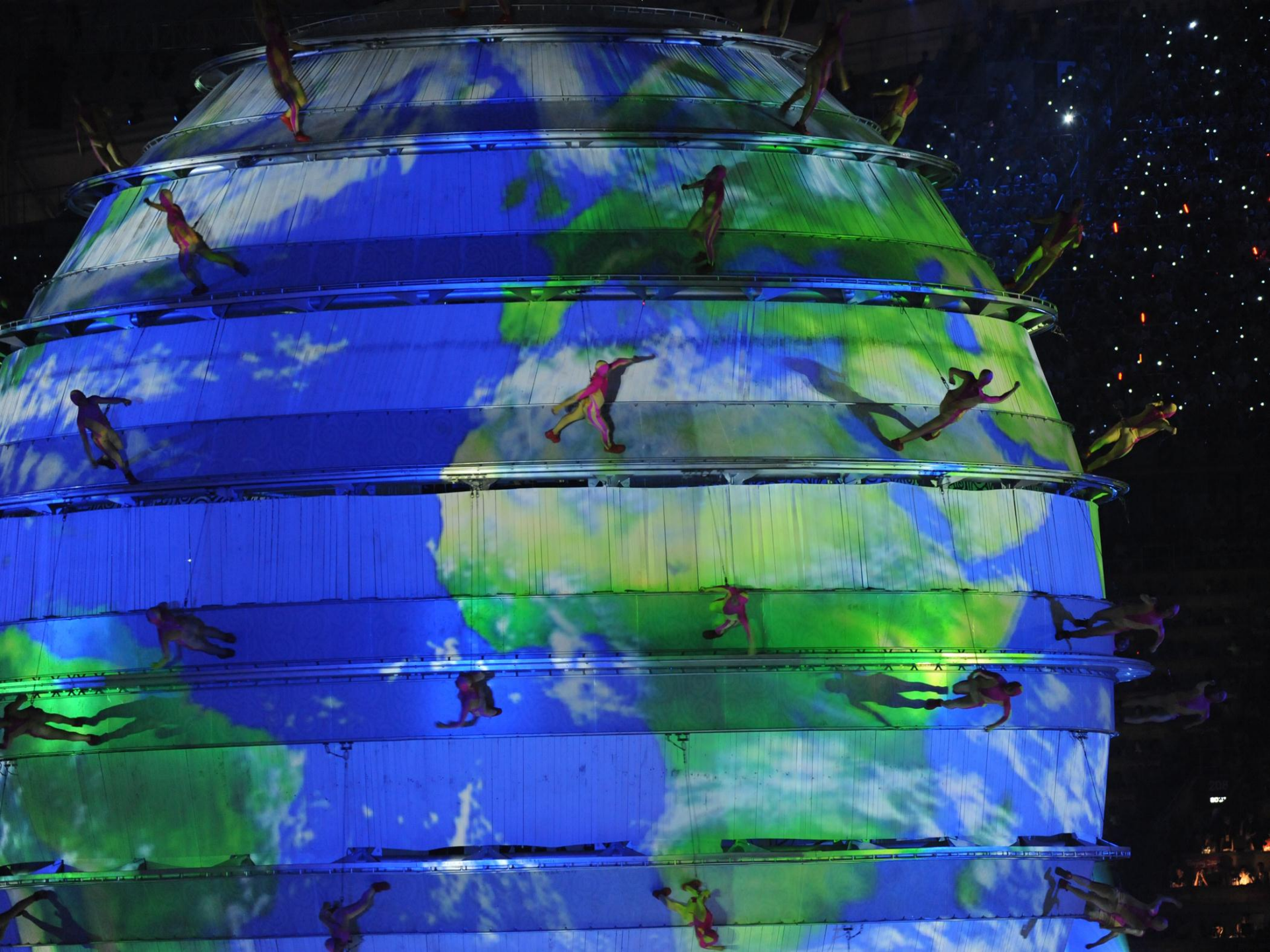
1985 UPS in all
50 states,
Canada and 6
European
countries served

2011 UPS in
all 50 states,
Canada and
200+
countries
served

4 Positions on Globalization

Position 1: Globalization is producing a homogeneity that fuses distinct cultural practices/traditions into something that could be called a world culture as embodied in trends such as world beat, world cuisine, and world cinema and the Olympic games.





Position 2: Globalization is producing a homogeneous world by destroying variety or, more specifically, the local cultures that get in the way of “progress” or cannot compete against large corporations.



The engines of this homogeneity—sometimes referred to as McWorld and Coca-colonization—are consumerism and corporate capitalism.



Position 3: Globalization actually brings value to and appreciation for local products and ways of doing things.



Position 3, con't

Although the products of corporate capitalism penetrate local markets, local ingredients, tastes, and preferences do not disappear.



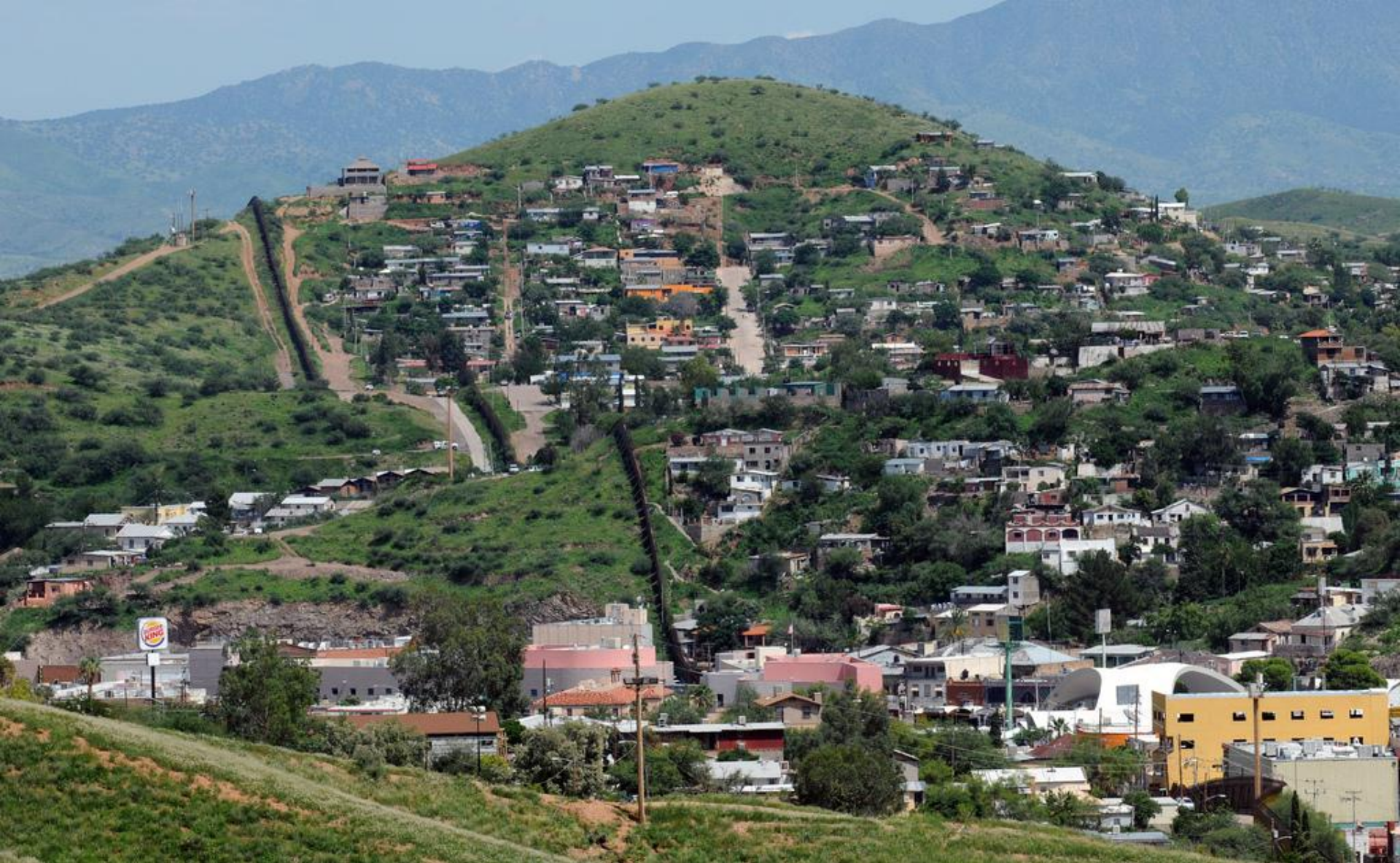
A Coca-Cola refrigerator in a remote area of Thailand, but ...



A look inside shows Coca-Cola AND an local brands of soft drinks and water.

Position 4: Globalization and its interconnections intensify cultural differences by actually sparking conflicts as people fight:

- (1) to preserve their identity and way of life,
- (2) to resist outside influences that clash with cultural ideals, or
- (3) to protect and enforce boundaries even as they are opened (Appelrouth and Edles 2007).



Newly constructed fence (since 2006) built to control movement across the U.S./Mexico border. Notice how fence divides communities that once were one.

Capitalism is *the* force shaping the character of globalization in several ways.

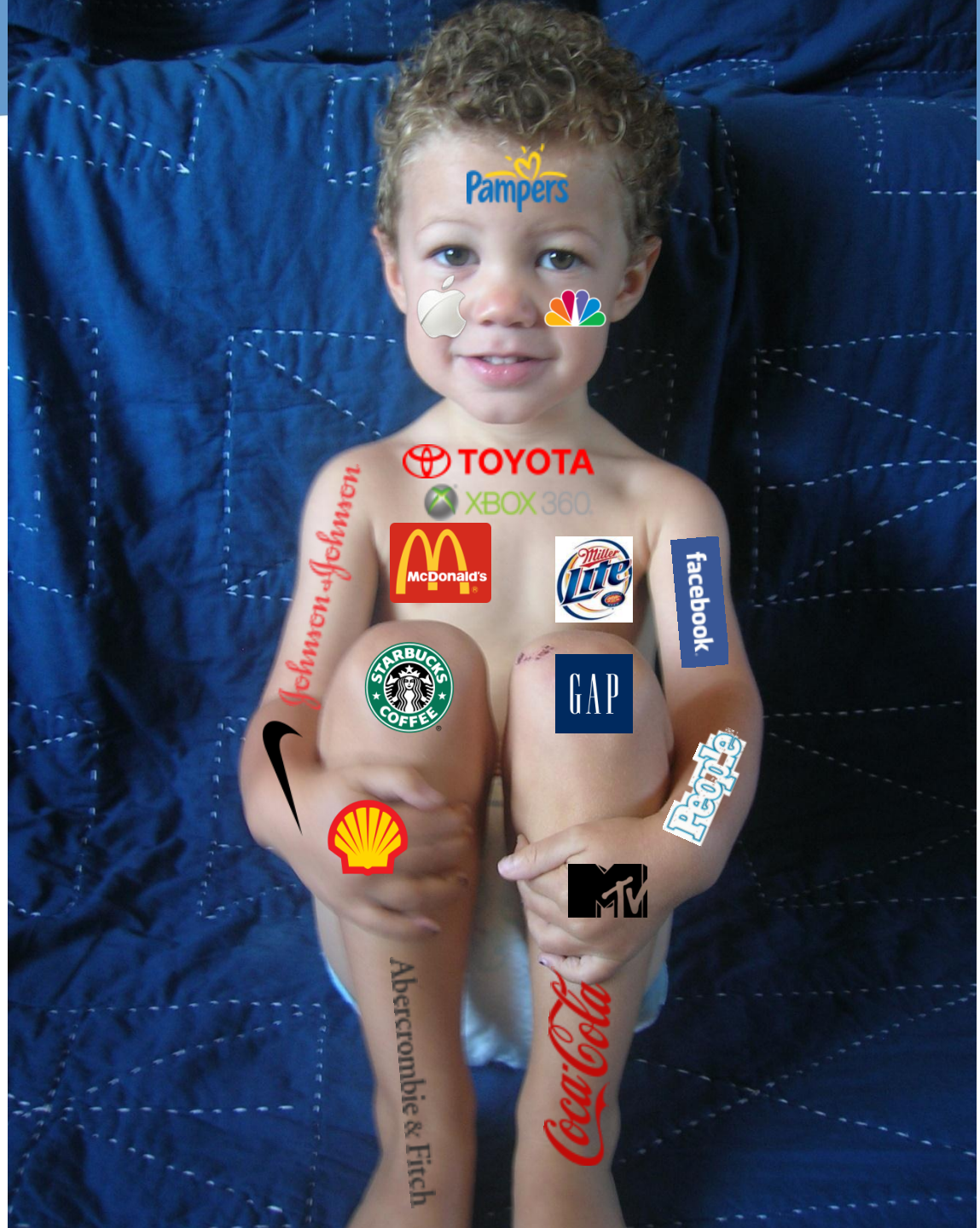
1. The vehicle of global capitalism is the transnational corporation.



2. The driver of global capitalism is the transnational capitalist class.



3. The cultural ideology of consumerism is the fuel that powers the motor of global capitalism.



Ideology of Consumption (according to Sklair)

- ✓ “proclaims that the meaning of life is to be found in the things that we possess.”
- ✓ when one consumes one feels alive, and “to remain fully alive, we must continuously consume, discard, and consume” (p. 601).

Ideology of Consumption (according to Sklair)

The expansion of capitalism depends on creating legions of consumers who buy, not to satisfy real needs, but:

- ✓ because they believe that buying things will allow them to become something they could not be otherwise.
- ✓ to satisfy “artificially created desires.”