

Discussion Questions

The best way you can prepare for class and, ultimately, the Critical Thought Papers, is to take notes on each of the readings/videos and outline the answers to these questions. This approach will also help you prepare for the class discussion, which should help to boost your participation grade.

2nd Half of Semester

International Trade System -10/31

1. What are China's production advantages?
2. Why would it be difficult for other GS countries follow China's model?

International Trade System- 11/2 (online)

1. Why are the US and Mexico at odds over tomatoes? How does this affect their trade relations?
2. Why are the US and Antigua at odds over gambling? Why does this dispute continue to go unresolved?
3. What does the U.S. government do to protect its sugar industry? How is Mexico trying to protect its sugar industry? How do these respective policies affect trade relations?
4. What do the tomato, gambling, and sugar trade issues have in common?

Chapter 4-Cocoa Beans- 11/9

1. How is the current situation on cocoa farms in West Africa tied to Spanish Mesoamerican colonization?
2. How do implementation, monitoring, and enforcement of the Protocol demonstrate the diff. of addressing HR in IPE?
3. Why would MNCs care about a protocol?
4. What incentives do the Ivory Coast and Ghana have, as sovereign states, to comply with the Protocol?
5. What difficulties do the Ivory Coast and Ghana face relying on cocoa as a cash crop, and only as a cash crop?
6. What are the arguments supporting child labor in west Africa?
7. What are the criticisms of using child labor?
8. Why the push for fair trade in the cocoa industry?
9. What incentives do MNCs have to comply with the Protocol- e.g., use ethically-sourced beans?

International Investment & Financial Flows – 11/14

1. What is the investment appeal of Indonesia and Cambodia?
2. What issues/challenges do MNCs encounter?
3. How do these countries benefit from the foreign direct investment (FDI) from MNCs?

International Investment & Financial Flows -11/16 (for 11/21)

1. How do Ian and Curt go about trying to understand corn production? What do they learn from their experience?
2. According to Ian and Curt, what impact did Earl Butz have?
3. What are the implications of US corn production for the global food system?

International Investment & Financial Flows - 11/21

1. What is the treadmill effect? How does it describe changes in the U.S. agriculture industry? What are the consequences of these changes?
2. How do food manufacturers 'add value' to their products to make a profit?

3. What factors contribute to rising rates of obesity in the global north? What about in the global south? What impact has this had on consumers' health?
4. For years, there was the talk of a 'Twinkie tax'. Now some states, like New York, have actually passed a sugar tax and banned super-sized sugar soft drinks. Is this the answer to reducing consumption?
5. How does what Ian and Curt reveal in *King Corn* relate to the information in this chapter?

International Investment & Financial Flows -11/28

1. What challenges do MNCs like Toyo face when investing in sub-Saharan Africa?
2. What are the various causes of transportation delay in sub-Saharan Africa?
3. What effect does delay at ports have on sub-Saharan Africa's growth potential?
4. How do big grocers affect food prices (buying and selling)?
5. How are Aldi and Lidl's practices a reflection of how MNCs work?
6. How is Aldi's practices inconsistent with its sustainability reputation?
7. What is the investment appeal of India for Walmart and Amazon? What issues/challenges do these MNCs encounter?
8. What effect has Diwali had on India's online commerce competition?
9. How do these countries benefit from the foreign direct investment (FDI) from MNCs?
10. How are the examples of Aldi and Lidl, Walmart and Amazon similar?

International Investment & Financial Flows – 11/30

1. What similarities do the highlighted countries have that are tied to corruption?
2. What factors contribute to the DRC's corruption?
3. How has the DRC tried to eradicate these corruption issues?

Chapter 8 -12/5

1. How do states, MNCs, and farmers/fishers fit together in food production?
2. Where do consumers fit into the global food system?
3. Production of what food items most prominently discuss price volatility?
4. What food chapters most prominently discuss labor issues?
5. What chapters most prominently discuss the residual effects of colonization?
6. What chapter most prominently discusses the challenges protecting the common good?
7. For many GS countries, the key to food security is not growing cash crops, but rather growing what kind of crops?
8. What is the most effective solution, though an unlikely one, to securing the global food supply?