Class Activities for **Chapter 17: Global and International Social Work**

**Class activity #1**

Split the class into discussion groups of 4-5. Hand out the following to each group.

One issue that has gained more attention in recent years is FGC, or female genital cutting (sometimes called female genital mutilation or FGM). This is a procedure that varies somewhat from culture to culture where it is practiced (mostly in Africa), but which always involves at the very least the cutting/removal of the clitoris. Previously done as girls reached sexual maturity, it is now often done to girls as young as 3 or 4 simply because the procedure is less expensive to perform at that time. This procedure serves no purpose other than reducing the woman’s ability to feel sexual pleasure, which some believe is necessary in order to stop her from being promiscuous and therefore make her desirable marriage material for men. Sometimes FGC goes as far as sewing the girl’s labia together to make penetration impossible, allowing only enough of an opening for the passage or urine and menstrual blood.

This procedure is typically conducted by elders of the culture—sometimes a respected woman, sometimes an older male relative—and not by people with any sort of medical training or access to sterilized tools or anesthetic. It is painful for the girls to endure and can leave them with lasting nerve damage, or even threaten their lives when too much blood is lost. Many of the countries where it is practiced have mounted education campaigns to stop people from performing the rite, but it continues, especially in isolated rural tribes.

Many human rights groups on the international stage have taken an interest in stopping FGC, or at the very least, educating local women and leaders about it in the countries where it occurs.

As a group, discuss the following.

1) Is it all right for people from other countries to come in and try to stop a country from engaging in a traditional cultural practice, even if that practice is dangerous?

2) Are there cultural practices in your own country that may seem strange, discriminatory, improper, or even dangerous to outsiders? How would you respond to people from another country coming in to tell you why you should stop?

3) What do you see as the biggest roadblock to really stopping FGC altogether?

4) When there are serious human rights violations taking place in a country, yet supported by a large number of locals (e.g., execution of homosexuals and accused adulterous women in some African and Middle Eastern countries), what is the best strategy to take if one hopes to see those violations reduced or eliminated?

**Class activity #2**

You will need computers or students with smart phones for this activity.

Split the class into groups. Let them know that each group will be given an area of policy and will be asked to identify the American policy in that area and then compare it to the policies a number of other countries have in the same area *briefly*—no need to go into great depth here. The process should take 20-25 minutes.

Someone in the group should take notes about the different policies for reporting to the class. If information is available about the effectiveness or outcomes of these policies, report that as well. In reporting the differences, students should talk about what they find surprising or bothersome, and what is the most impressive to them out of the different policies they identified.

Possible areas for students to investigate:

Maternal (and paternal) leave

DUI/DWI punishments

National health care  
Disability-related assistance

Drug abuse

Marriage equality

College education funding

Provision of food to the needy

Capital punishment

Prostitution and pimping

…and many more! (Feel free to add your own)

**Class activity #3**

This mirrors an activity that was done at the beginning of the semester, offered in Chapter 2 of the instructor’s manual. It is an effort to see what, if anything, has changed about students’ views on some of the key topics discussed over the course of the semester.

Have the class stand up and scatter around the room. Label one side of the room “agree” (write on the chalkboard/whiteboard or put up a sign on one wall) and label the other side of the room “disagree.” Tell the students you will be reading a series of statements and you would like them to move to a place in the room that reflects how they feel about the statement. If they strongly agree, they should move far to the “agree” side of the room. If they somewhat agree, they may move halfway between the middle of the room and the “disagree” wall. After everyone has decided where to stand, ask for volunteers to explain why they are standing where they are. Make a special note of the fact that you would really like to hear from people who are now standing in a different place than they would have stood at the beginning of the semester.

Statements

1. People have a good understanding of what social workers do.
2. Poor people who receive welfare benefits are generally too lazy to work.
3. The Affordable Care Act is a positive thing for our society.
4. I expect Social Security to be available to me when I retire.
5. Families who are on welfare should not get more benefits if more children are born into the family while they are on welfare.
6. Social welfare may hurt its recipients as much as it endeavors to help them, by preventing them from pulling themselves out of poverty.
7. Environmentalism and social work go hand in hand.
8. Women are close to achieving equality in America.
9. Adults should be able to marry someone of the same sex.
10. Marijuana should be legalized for medical and recreational purposes.
11. America’s social service programs are far better than most other countries.

Feel free to add your own based on class discussions or comments you may have received from students.