

Contents

About the Authors / viii

List of Illustrations / ix

Foreword / xi

Preface / xiii

1 The Reality of Inequality: Stories from Around the World / 1

A Global Village? / 1

A Few of the Players / 2

Using Sociology to Study Global Inequalities / 8

Questioning Assumptions / 10

How This Book Is Organized / 14

2 An Unequal World / 15

The Death of Children / 15

Other Forms of Inequality / 20

Contemporary Global Trends: A World
of Changes and Contradictions / 26

Conclusions / 37

3 Constructing a Model of Global Inequalities / 39

Two Traditional Explanations for Global Inequality / 39

Modernization Theory: Blaming the Victim / 40

World-System Theory: Blaming Outside Actors / 44

Combining External and Internal Explanations
of Global Inequality / 53

Application to World Regions / 56

4 Africa: A Continued Decline? / 59

A Land of Contradictions / 59

Africa's History: A Brief Look / 61

Contemporary Life in Africa / 64

Strong Societies and Weak States / 67

The Persistence of Grinding Poverty / 68

Battles for the Body / 71

"Presidents for Life," Sort Of / 75

Becoming Irrelevant to Others / 79

Reduced to Symbols / 83

Africa in Theoretical Perspective / 85

5 Asia: An Emerging Giant / 91

Bats, Balls, and Whips / 91

Magic Dragons? / 94

Late Industrialization / 96

Economic Growth *and* a High Level of Equality?

The Japanese Case / 101

Inequality in South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan,
and Singapore / 103

China: From Mao Jackets to Calvin Klein Jeans / 106

A Land of Paradox / 108

Moving Beyond the Graveyard of Vietnam / 111

Asia in Theoretical Perspective / 115

6 Europe: United or Divided? / 121

Crumbling Walls / 121

Why 1989? / 125

The Rhetoric Is Unity; What Is the Reality? / 129

Welfare States: Benevolent or Burdensome? / 136

The Dark Side of Europe / 142

Lessons Unlearned: The Return of "Little Hitlers" / 144

The Roller Coaster of War / 150

Europe in Theoretical Perspective / 153

7 The Americas: Reinventing Ourselves / 157

The Road to Rio: Environmental Apocalypse Now? / 158

The Lessons of Rio: Is Sustainable Growth Possible? / 167

A Question of Sovereignty / 168

Economic Consolidation in the Americas / 177

The Americas in Theoretical Perspective / 186

8 Creating a Better World / 189

Summarizing Trends and Changes / 189

Creating Positive Changes / 190

Forcing Change from the Outside: What Is Justified? / 196

Creating Positive Social Changes: What Individuals Can Do / 200

References / 205

Index / 215