Family History

Here, I will relate the data I have collected about by family history to globalization. Guest (2017, p.17) states that globalization is “the worldwide intensification of interactions and increased movement of money, people, goods, and ideas within and across national borders.”[[1]](#footnote-1) My family history dates back to many increased migrations from different countries to the United States, which includes Germany, Canada, Ireland and Scotland. While migrating, my family experienced many uneven developments, since migration to the United States, during the 1800s, was a popular occurrence. The United States gave a stable form of living that provided many opportunities for individuals from all over the world. This caused the “melting pot” in the United States as there were more and more cultures gathering together, as immigrants found a new identity in this new homeland and merged into American society.

There were struggles within their own countries, that forced my family to have to emigrate and then immigrant in a place that provided better circumstances. To make this popular time of migration possible, Guest (2017, p.18) states that the theory of time-space compression created “the rapid innovation of communication and transportation technologies that has changed the way we think about space and time.”[[2]](#footnote-2) Most of my family traveled over by boat because they came across the Atlantic Ocean into the heightened United States ports. However, there was an increase of available transportation within their countries to get them to a harbor, like railroads, cars and streets. My family settled in the United States after migration and, from there on out, has stayed. The Industrial Revolution had a huge shift from agriculture artisanal skill craft to machine-based manufacturing, which helped the United States become more industrialized and urban.[[3]](#footnote-3) This drew in more immigrants and helped the process of globalization. Due to industrialization and urbanization, it caused much change in family structures. My family history falls more under the first demographic transition, due to the traditional nuclear family structure along with the decrease in fertility rates. The decrease in fertility was explained by “the unleash of an enormous sentimental and financial investment in a child”(p.1)[[4]](#footnote-4) Overall, my family went through increased migration to the United States, where they settled lived out their lives through the increase of industrialization and urbanization that capitalizes on globalization.

While learning about my ancestry and family tree, I used information gained from interviews of my family and from Ancestry.com. I first interviewed my grandparents on both my mother’s and father’s side of the family. I set a time to call each one of them to discuss what they remembered about our families. First, I called my grandmother on my father’s side, Linda Hutchinson Forst, and asked her a series of questions and she answered the questions to the best of her ability. I continued by asking personal information about herself, like where she was born and lived, her birth date, occupation, and her siblings. Furthermore, I asked who her parents were, my great-grandparents, and the three main questions of major areas they lived, occupation, and any dates associated with them. I kept going down her family by asking the same three questions until she did not remember anymore. She remembered all the way until my great-great-grandparents. I did this same process while talking to my grandfather on my father’s side, James Wesley Forst, and my grandfather on my mother’s side, Arthur Thomas Wood. The struggles I ran into during my interviewing included some information that was slightly off and some information that could not be retained due to my grandparents not remembering. Also, I could not interview my grandmother on my mother’s side, Pamela Jane Shoup Wood, due to her death in 2013. I struggled with finding information from her side of the family. I had to interview my mother, Sarah Forst, to retain some information about my grandmother’s side of the family. However, I was very impressed with how much information I could gather from my grandparents, and this gave me a good base for my research on Ancestry.com.

Through Ancestry.com, I began to look up information off of the last pieces of information that my interviews gave me. For example, my grandfather on my mother’s side remembered information up to my great-great-grandparents. I then started my search with my great-great-grandparents’ initial search that included their occupation, dates, name, and geography. This helped me narrow my searches and find information about their siblings and or parents. I found that the marriage certificates usually stated the parents’ names which would give me the next generation in my ancestry. From this, I would then begin the search for the information on the next generation. It was amazing to see the connections and information gathered. The obstacles I came across on this website included the ability to know which people were in my family, due to the repetition of names in the world. This is why the additional information on each individual is important, to narrow down the search to ensure you are looking at the correct individual. I also came across the obstacle where I could not find specific information about the individual I was looking for. However, I kept searching or moved onto the next search. Overall, I organized my information I gathered, from the interviews and Ancestry.com, through a written-out kinship diagram including the information for each individual and a general kinship diagram to show the connection of each person using symbols. I gathered up to the earliest ancestries I could find and discovered many different migrations and individual information in each family, like where they lived, how many members of the family there were, specific dates and their occupations.

The kinship diagram of my family, and the combination of family interviews and Ancestry.com, helped me determine, and make connections, with the different family forms and structures within my family. Puschmann and Solli (2014) states that with industrialization and urbanization came the theory of social breakdown. This was the shift from extended family to nuclear families to fit the requirements of industrial life better than living with multiple generations under one roof.[[5]](#footnote-5) Throughout my family history, there was traditionally a nuclear family mold. Also, for a majority of the time, my family stayed in the same general area of each other and maintained extended family ties. In particular, my father’s side of the family, on both my grandmother’s and grandfather’s side, stayed in New Jersey, which could contribute to the cultures and norms within that industrial region, to keep a nuclear family mold. My family tree fits this theory, as the information I gained from my family interviews and Ancesrty.com came after the first Industrial Revolution in 1760s. Therefore, more nuclear families would exist rather than extended family households, with society’s shift to a more industrial lifestyle.

With an industrial lifestyle, there came a theory called the first demographic transition (FDT), or the “demographic revolution.” This theory refers to the decline in morality and fertility in the 18th century that leads to an older-stable population of traditional nuclear families. The “traditional” nuclear family consisted of a married, heterosexual couple with their children.[[6]](#footnote-6) Also, this theory looked at the decrease in fertility due to the “unleash of an enormous sentimental and financial investment in a child; Child King Era.”(p. 1)[[7]](#footnote-7) Within my family history, there was a decrease in children, especially on my mother’s father’s side. For example, my great-great-grandfather was one of six children, my grandfather was one of four children, my mother was one of five children and I am one of three children. Also, on this side of my extended family, all the children are three or fewer. This falls under the first demographic transition, since there was a decrease in fertility over time, with industrialization and urbanization, but there were still more than two children. My family history has seen more diverse families in the more recent generations, which is a part of the second demographic transition theory, however, there is a majority of nuclear families rather than diverse families, with a ratio of 16:4. Overall, my family history pattern falls more along the first demographic transition while there was an increase of industrialization and urbanization in the United States.

Having said that, my family migrated to the United States in the 18th century. Migration itself is stretching the network of human interaction and creating new opportunities for encounter and exchange. It links up cultures, ideas, and institutions while creating opportunities for people to relocate and expand beyond long-term networks of kinship and religious, political and ethnic identities.[[8]](#footnote-8) My family history involves many different cultures and migrations. First, my great-great-great-grandfather, Hamilton H. Wood, on my mother’s side of the family, was born in Montreal, Canada and moved to Massachusetts during his lifetime. I could not find a specific date of emigration, however, I did a calculation to estimate the departure date. Assuming each generation takes about 25 years, I multiplied the number of generations, six, by 25. (Six generations x 25 years = 150.) I then subtracted 150 from the current year, 2020. (2020- 150= 1870.) This calculation helps to estimate when my ancestors might have emigrated from Canada, which is around 1870. In the mid-19th century, sanitation was a growing concern among social statisticians. Poor health was tied to bad living conditions, and an indication therefore was taken from the rate of mortality.[[9]](#footnote-9) Philip P. Carpenter tied the high mortality rate, in Montréal, Canada, to the poor sanitation. He visited Montréal in the near end of April 1859, where the sanitation problem first was due for change.[[10]](#footnote-10) This direct problem of sanitation was brought up the year my great-great-great-grandfather was born, in 1859, and it continued throughout the 1860s. This goes through the perfect timeline of when my family emigrated Canada, in 1870s. The sanitation was poor, which caused morality, economic and political problems, which was not healthy or ideal for a new and upcoming family to raise children in. This could have been a source of pushes that drove my ancestors out of Montréal. They settled down in the United States which, in the 19th century, was emerging as one of the most industrialized and prosperous nations in the world, and it was the closet country to Canada, which more likely pulls them to immigrate there.

Second, on one side of my father’s ancestry, my great-great-great-grandparents were from Germany. I could not find their direct names or when they emigrated. However, their son’s name was William C. Forst, and he was born in New Jersey in 1859, so the emigration occurred before he was born. Therefore, the emigration was not too long before 1859. “In 1847, more than 74,000 Germans reached the shores of the New world; and in 1850 there were nearly 79,000. The largest number came in 1882: 250,630 Germans migrated to the United States during that year.”[[11]](#footnote-11) Therefore, it was increasingly popular at the time my ancestors emigrated to migrate from Germany to the United States. Many new government and law changes occurred in Germany. For example, there was the addition of The Carlsbad Decrees, a series of restrictive laws, along with the increase growth of Prussian influence in the German States. This caused uprisings in the German States as the middle and working class demanded reforms. This further contributed to political unrest.[[12]](#footnote-12) This change in political and economic status in Germany caused a great amount distress and conflict. This could have been a push that drove my ancestors out of Germany at this time, especially if they were about to start a family.

Lastly, on the other side of my father’s ancestry, there were migrations from Ireland and Scotland to the United States. My great-great-great-great-grandfather was from Scotland-England and my great-great-great-great-grandmother was from Ireland. I also do not know their names or when they immigrated into the United States. Therefore, I carried out the same calculation process as before to get an estimate of the date of emigration by my ancestors. They are the seventh generation, so the estimated year would be 1845. In Scotland, poverty has always been noted as the main reason for emigration. Emigration was perceived by trade unions and other groups as a practical solution to unemployment and economic depression. In fact, the height of emigration corresponded with years of harsh economic depression, particularly in the late 1840s and early 1850s, the time in which my great-great-great-great-grandfather would have emigrated. As a matter of fact, from 1853, “50% of emigrating Scots chose to settle in the U.S.”[[13]](#footnote-13) The depression and poor living standards, and change in culture, economics and politics, is a push that could have caused my ancestors to migrate away from Scotland and to the United States to improve their living standards. In addition, my great-great-great-great-grandmother emigrated from Ireland. The Ireland Great Famine caused the migration of more than two-million individuals who sought refuge in the United States. The famine had its beginning in 1845, when the potato blight first appeared. The infestation ruined up to one-half of the potato crop that year, and about three-quarters of the crop over the next seven years. Emigration in that year was not heavily affected. However, the second failure of potato crop, in 1846 caused panic throughout Ireland and resulted in an increase of emigration.[[14]](#footnote-14) Since my great-great-great-great-grandmother roughly emigrated around 1845, it was right when the famine hit Ireland. This epidemic drove individuals out of Ireland and into the United States for a new start and better place to live. Before the changes to the Passenger Act and the increase of head tax, it was less expensive for Irish immigrants to book passage on the empty timber ships returning to British North American posts, which includes both Massachusetts and New Jersey, where my ancestors immigrated to.[[15]](#footnote-15) This was an example of uneven development for travel, because with the increase of immigration, in 1848 the British North American ports increased the charge to enter. There was also an uneven development of transportation for the individuals in Ireland itself.

This data has shown that my family comes from many increased migrations to the United States, experiences many first demographic transitions through industrialization and urbanization and contributed to globalization. My ancestors all escaped their homelands to come to America, to get a better life and move away from the different form of corruption in their country. United States was a desirable place to immigrant to, due to the increase in industrialization and urbanization. In fact, the United States was globalized due to the increase of foreign immigrants, who brought over their culture and customs from their homelands, like my family did. Once my family settled, and as the generations passed, there was many ongoing themes and patterns that fit under the first demographic transition, in the United States. This transition went alongside industrialization and urbanization, with the decrease in fertility and focus on a traditional nuclear family structure. If I would continue my research, I would look further into my family history, on their occupations, based on their migration and their area of residency in the United States. This could help also contribute to the concept of globalization, and how it has affected the United States and my family history. I also would like to go further into my family history to find more areas of migration and patterns in my ancestors’ homelands, and how that can connect further into globalization.

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