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Human Geography

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A short reflection on 'Deliberate identities:  
becoming local in America in a global age'

Globalization has brought about changes including the destruction of more traditional bonds to communities. *Globalism* indicates that individuals are passive trend-followers. **To counter globalism, neolocalism** says that individuals consciously attempt to establish, rebuild, and cultivate local ties, local identities, and local economies—**individuals are trendsetters**. In essence, Neolocalism puts the emphasis onto individuals' conscious (Schnell).

Alongside with globalization, because of modernity, industrialization, ever-improving communications and travel technology, it is easier for people get to interact with each other via means other than face-to-face, **it is easier for people to get together**. Beside local places where people interact face-to-face, people now can get together although living in different places via means, for instance, online Skyping. **People get the choice to interact with** whom they share interests, group identities.

So in the time of globalization where people are bombarded by popular cultures and world-trends, **people feel the loss of cultural identities and political representation**—people tend to feel missing out on “a sense of the local, a sense of belonging to place, and a sense of that place as distinct from other places” (Schnell). Though so, people long to be present with each other. They actively cultivate movements, which link individuals together for a shared sense of place (Schnell).

From my own life, here is an example of *neolocalism*: **Sriracha hot chili sauce**.



**Sriracha hot chilli sauce is made in USA by a Vietnamese migrant, David Tran.** Consumers who want to taste the Vietnamese food culture found the place for Sriracha sauce to be in the market. Here in the U.S., people eat sriracha hot chili sauce in restaurants, especially Vietnamese ones.

This example obviously fits into the “local” as community building view of neolocalism.

Yes, I agree with Schnell that “place-rooted activism is precisely the kind of engagement that is needed to evince true, lasting social change at any level.” I see that, for example, the *#MeToo movement* started online via Twitter, but it only truly became a thing, a movement when we started to localize the shares, the stories, to identify clearly what ideal and idea need to be changed in America, in the real world, for everyone to live in a livable world.

*Works Cited*

Schnell, Steven M. Deliberate identities: becoming local in America in a global age. *Journal of Cultural Geography*, vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 55-89, Taylor & Francis, tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08873631.2012.745984. Accessed 18 February 2020.