

Victorian Association of Social Studies Teachers (VASST)  
Annual Conference  
Deakin University – Burwood Campus  
4 December 2006

## **Keynote: Teaching and Learning about Globalization**

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### **1. Introduction**

To the popular imagination, globalisation has something to do with our shrinking world, and this is a good place to start. The world seems to be getting smaller because modern communications, faster transport and the increasing density of cross-border interactions have compressed space and time such that we are becoming increasingly connected to other parts of the world. These cross-border flows are not only spreading in their geographical reach but also becoming faster and denser, from a few clear lines to a spaghetti tangle. They include goods, services and money; culture and ideas; people (such as tourists, migrants, sex slaves or refugees); contraband (drugs and arms), environmental problems and diseases (such as AIDS). This is the phenomenon of globalisation, which I shall define as a multifaceted process, or set of processes, that are increasing global interconnectedness across all key domains of human activity and breaking down the significance of borders. As sociologist Roland Robertson (1992, 8) points out, globalisation refers not only to the apparent compression of the world but also to an intensifying *consciousness* of the world as a whole.

While these cross border flows are affecting all key domains of human activity, they doing so in different ways and with differing consequences

For example, the information revolution has enabled the instantaneous movement of ideas and information. However, this revolution has not reached all corners of the globe. As Robert Keohane notes, 'At the turn of the millennium more than one-quarter of the American population used the World Wide Web compared to one hundredth of 1 percent of the population of South Asia. Most people in the world today do not have telephones; hundreds of millions live as peasants in remote villages with only slight connections to world markets or for global flow of ideas' (Keohane 2000, 106).

The velocity of cross-border commercial transactions also varies significantly, from instantaneous online transactions on international stock exchanges involving the flow of more than one trillion dollars on a daily basis, to the relatively slower movement of goods and services.

Production has also become more globalised, with commodity chains now spanning many nations and regions. Major corporations with highly recognised brand-names (Disney, Nike, The Gap) have increasingly turned to out-sourcing and sub-contracting for production in so-called sweatshops in regions with cheap labour, while retaining control of design, marketing and retailing.

People, however, do not move as freely as money, goods, services and ideas. While the movement of tourists, commercial travellers and international students has increased dramatically in recent decades, the movement of economic and political refugees (particularly from poorer parts of the world) is considerably restricted. Indeed, this is one area where we have seen a tightening of border patrols and immigration rules.

Growth in world economic output and human population have generated mounting ecological problems, many of which transgress political borders and some of which are genuinely global in terms of their physical reach, significance and/or ubiquity (such as the thinning of the ozone layer, species extinction and global warming). The image of the whole earth (first photographed from outer space in the late 1960s) has had a profound affect on human consciousness in underscoring the fragile and finite character

of the earth and our common ecological fate. Yet ecological risks fall unevenly on different classes and nations. Global warming is a global problem that will affect everyone, but the poor are expected to be much harder hit than the rich, even though they bear less responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions and are much less able to adapt.

Transborder military capability is even more deeply skewed. Only a few countries have intercontinental missiles, and only the United States has the logistical and command and control capabilities for global reach with conventional forces. The US also has hundreds of thousands of American troops stationed in over 60 bases in 19 countries. At the same time non-state actors can use global networks to cause spectacular damage against the most powerful state in the world. 9/11 brought home to the world how difficult it is for states to secure their borders against diffuse terrorist networks.

These brief examples make it clear that globalisation is both a *multi-dimensional* and deeply *uneven* process. We therefore cannot generalise from one dimension of globalisation and assume that other dimensions will follow a similar pattern with similar results. Like the blind men and the elephant, each part of the beast is different from the rest and cannot necessarily tell us about other parts, or indeed the whole.

Indeed, the unevenness of these processes has prompted many skeptics to claim that globalisation is a myth, that it is nothing new, and/or that it is not really global. Some skeptics suggest that recent economic trends are best conceptualised in terms of increasing internationalisation and regionalisation rather than globalisation (Weiss, 1998; Hirst and Thompson 1999).

Proponents respond by pointing out that *economic* exchanges represent only one facet of globalisation, and the explanation of globalisation cannot be reduced to economic or technological drivers. Globalisation, they argue is an indeterminate process that affects all dimensions of human activity, but in different ways and different degrees (Held and McGrew 2000, 6). Globalisation has generated many new opportunities and new forms

of wealth and power. But it has also generated new risks and insecurities and exacerbated many pre-existing inequalities.

The uneven character of globalisation also helps to explain why there is so much disagreement about whether it is to be welcomed and encouraged as a positive development that promotes peace, prosperity, and knowledge, or rejected as a process that exacerbates violence, racism, inequality, poverty and environmental degradation. For example, critics of the global economic ideology of neoliberalism argue that the more that social choices are left to impersonal market mechanisms rather than conscious political deliberation, the more we can expect wealth to rise to the top, and risk to sink to the bottom, to adapt one of Ulrich Beck's many quips (Beck 1995, 137; see also Rodrik 1997).

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As this brief introduction makes clear, globalisation is a sprawling and deeply contested topic. I have been asked to reflect upon the relevance of globalisation to social studies education in secondary schools in Victoria. Should we regard it as simply another 'topic' to be taught? Or does its broader social influence demand a more considered pedagogical response from teachers? My overall argument will be that globalisation is the *Ben Hur* of social studies topics, with a cast of billions, and that it provides a wide range of pedagogical opportunities, provided it is handled with care. I will lay out this argument in three stages.

First, I will track the general shift from the study of international relations to the study of globalisation and show how and why globalisation has emerged as an overarching, meta-topic in the social sciences and humanities. This will help to make clear why we cannot afford to ignore it.

Next, I will identify some of the core challenges, pitfalls and opportunities associated with teaching and learning about globalisation.

Finally, I will provide some examples of how the topic might be approached, unbundled and rebundled, and evaluated.

## **2. The shift from international relations to global politics**

Once upon a time (that is, for most of the Cold War period), international studies meant international relations, understood as relations between states. From this traditional perspective, the only actors on the world stage that really mattered were states and their political and military leaders. The core areas of study were strategic studies, foreign policy, diplomacy, treaty negotiation and, above all, war between states.

One of the reasons states have always been considered important by international relations scholars is that states are sovereign authorities, with the exclusive and supreme right to rule within their territories. States possess the monopoly of legitimised coercive control in the form of a standing military force to protect the state from external threats and a police force to uphold internal law and order. The principle of state sovereignty does not admit multiple centres of authority within state territory. Borders matter.

From the dominant international relations perspective of realism, the absence of a formal, overarching system of world government, or a world police force, means that security is an overriding concern of states. The state system is conceived as essentially a self-help system, where the will of the mightiest states prevails and the use of force is an ever-present possibility. International relations, from this perspective, can be explained in terms of the distribution of military capability. The study of international relations is about the clash of Great Powers over the centuries. The post-Cold War period has been characterised as a unipolar world, dominated by a single Super Power, but realists believe it is just a matter of time before American power will be balanced by a rising power (such as China).

Yet such a state-centric understanding of world politics misses a great deal of the action. States certainly remain key actors on the world stage, but there is now a much broader array of actors that are shaping world politics, ranging from international organisations, transnational corporations, rock bands, currency speculators, non-government organisations and terrorist networks. While realism can still shed light on the security dilemma and relations between hostile states (India vs. Pakistan, North Korea vs. the USA) and the more general practice of balancing and bandwagoning in shifting security alliances, it can neither explain nor evaluate the implications of the spread of human rights norms, the liberalisation of trade, the growth in environmental treaties and the spread of the internet.

There are two significant dates that help to define the post-Cold War period. The first, and most obvious one, is 1989, which marked the crumbling of the Berlin Wall and the ensuing disintegration of the Soviet Union. Realists failed to predict this momentous event. Although there are many rival accounts of this ‘velvet revolution’ I am inclined to agree with Fred Halliday that ‘it was the T-shirt and not the gunboat that broke down the communist system’s resistance to global capitalism’ (Halliday 1995, 48). More generally, economic globalisation presents a major challenge to realism’s state-centric view of the world. Decisions made in the boardrooms of transnational corporations can shape global politics as profoundly as the decisions made in the Pentagon.

The second momentous event occurred on September 11, 2001. These terrorist attacks showed that non-state actors could penetrate Fortress America and strike high prestige targets from across the world and inflict high numbers of civilian casualties using familiar, everyday civilian technology. The events presented a new type of challenge to the state monopoly of organized violence and they have profoundly reshaped discourses of security, politics and identity throughout the world.

In view of these momentous developments, many introductory university courses that were once badged ‘international relations’ have been renamed as ‘global politics’ or the politics of globalisation. Where the traditional name has been retained, the scope of

international relations has been stretched beyond the traditional state-centric framework to encompass a range of new agenda issues and theories that form part of the politics of globalisation. Indeed, the meaning of international relations and global politics is increasingly converging.<sup>1</sup> The study of relations among states is now regarded as a mere sub-set of the study of the globalisation, which encompasses:

- relations between states *and* nonstate actors
- international *and* transboundary problems and concerns
- not only questions of security but also questions of economic development, poverty, environment, culture and global norms (such as human rights)
- questions concerning not only international order and stability but also international justice and democracy

One striking feature of this general shift is that those involved in the teaching of globalisation or global politics are now working on a much bigger canvas than traditional international relations scholars, both in terms of the breadth and diversity of issues covered and the range of theoretical frameworks employed. This brings us to the crucial question: why would we want to teach something as amorphous, sprawling and seemingly unmanageable as globalisation? Wouldn't it be easier to avoid the 'G' word and focus on the more manageable parts rather than the unmanageable whole?

I believe a strong case can be made for critically examining the whole elephant and not just its tail, ears, trunk or toenails. If there is a central insight to emerge from the study of globalisation it is that our fate, and the fate of distant others, is becoming more deeply intertwined. The idea of a shrinking world is also accompanied by the idea of a more vulnerable world. The more we become interconnected and interdependent, the more exposed we become to changes happening elsewhere. This sense of increasing global vulnerability arises from:

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<sup>1</sup> For example, one of the most popular introductory texts used in undergraduate teaching in universities (especially in Australia and the United Kingdom) is called *The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, edited by John Baylis and Steve Smith (President of the International Studies Association).

- growing inequalities (within and between states), which breeds resentment and hostility and the possibility of ‘political blowback’ in the form of revolution, conflict and the increasing risk of violence
- new insecurities and threats (renewed threats of nuclear proliferation, terrorism, global warming, resource scarcity, ecosystem degradation, AIDS);
- a growing concern that the processes of globalisation are out of control, or that no-one is really in full control

These developments are of great concern to young people, especially global warming. The upper range of likely temperature increase predicted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change over the next hundred years (if greenhouse gas emissions remain unchecked) is 1.4-5.8 degrees Celsius. This is of the same order as the increase that brought about an end to the last ice age - a rise of 4-6 degrees. The key different is that the latter increase took place over a period of 7,000 to 10,000 years rather than a mere 100 (Hare, 2005, 88). The global consequences of an increase of this order are expected to be catastrophic.

From a political science perspective, increasing interconnectedness and increasing vulnerability are two sides of the same coin. They raise profound questions of global justice and political accountability and control. How can the processes of globalisation be made more accountable to those who suffer? How can global inequalities be addressed? Who is really driving these processes? Are they in the wrong hands and/or are they really out of control?

Many political scientists have tracked the emergence of a ‘double democratic deficit’ in global governance. On the one hand, traditional, state-centric forms of democratic accountability have eroded as more and more decisions that affect domestic political life are made elsewhere. On the other hand, many of the decisions that are made elsewhere – particularly those that reinforce or exacerbate existing asymmetries in economic and political power – are subject to even more tenuous forms of political accountability.

Traditional, hierarchical forms of governance are being displaced or supplemented by new forms of decision making, such as informational networks (Castells 1996)

Together, these two developments have help to shape one of the most debated propositions in political science in the world today: is the state is in some kind of decline as a centre of political authority as a result of the processes of economic globalisation or whether it is merely being transformed?

Either way, it is widely acknowledged that the assumption of a necessary congruence between the state, peoples or nations, territory and decision-making power and authority is now under challenge.

### **3. Core challenges associated with teaching and learning about globalisation**

There are many challenges and opportunities associated with teaching and learning about globalisation but here I want to single out three sets.

The first and most obvious challenge is the sheer scale, breadth and complexity of the subject matter. For teachers, staying abreast with developments in the rapidly changing world of global politics is no easy task. Moreover, given that the distinction between the domestic and the international is breaking down, then we can no longer cordon off domestic politics from global politics. The results of Congressional or Presidential elections in the USA can have a profound impact on the rest of the world. Even shifts in political power in medium or small states (such as Iran, Israel and Venezuela) can generate significant global repercussions.

The second, and related challenge, is that there is no settled theoretical framework for teaching globalisation. While realism dominated the teaching and learning of international relations during the Cold War, in the new post-Cold War context theoretical

pluralism prevails. Textbooks and courses on theories of international relations/global politics at university level now typically cover realism, liberalism, neo-Marxism, Critical theory, constructivism, postcolonialism, feminism and, recently, green political theory. More comprehensive textbooks and courses on globalisation draw on sociological theories of the risk society and modernity, political theories of justice, democracy and citizenship as well as studies of nationalism, ethnicity, new social movements and identity politics.

Third, there has been a veritable explosion in the range and volume of information sources on globalisation. Indeed, the literature on globalisation is growing even faster than most of the indicators of globalisation (Guillèn 2001)! Alongside scholarly sources there has been a significant growth in more popular publications on globalisation. However, it is the World Wide Web that provides the biggest deluge of information, including blogs, activist websites and the increasingly popular Wikipedia. The upshot is globalisation infoglut - a bewildering array of information and analysis, much of which is unrefereed and variable in quality.

The Web is both an example of globalisation as well the most accessible source of information about globalisation. Yet there is a growing gap between the sheer volume of easily accessible information and analysis on the Web, and the distribution of the necessary skills and tools to assimilate and process it critically. For newcomers, it is sometimes difficult to sort out the differences between ‘globaloney’ and globalisation (Veseth 2005). Powerful search engines, such as Google, can provide an illusion of control but the ranking system is based on frequency of hits, not the quality of the information. In his prize-winning essay ‘Information Idol: Is Google making us stupid’, Gideon Haigh has suggested that Google has become the ‘takeaway food of information’ (Haigh 2006). It is fast, convenient and easy to consume, but it is not necessarily good for us. Indeed, Haigh argues that it is making us lazy. Many excellent sources of information are not accessible on Google. The page ranking system is similar to Australian Idol – based on popularity and not necessarily quality or originality. Wikipedia has emerged as the fountain of wisdom. Created in 2001, Wikipedia has

rapidly displaced the old-fashioned encyclopedia as the first port of call for basic information about any topic. It has an answer to literally everything, but unlike traditional encyclopedias it is not refereed. The entries in Wikipedia are written collaboratively and any one with access to the internet can edit, correct or add to an entry simply by clicking on the edit this page link.

The upshot of this expansion in the subject matter, theoretical frames and sources of information is that globalisation studies is at risk of collapsing under its own weight, of becoming too big, too amorphous, or too daunting to tackle. At the other extreme, efforts to simplify the subject sometimes reduce globalisation to a collection of clichés or else distort it through lopsided analysis that fails to register the complexity of the phenomenon. Teachers must learn to walk the tightrope that lies between these two abysses.

Yet the challenges confronting teachers and students of globalisation also provide important educational opportunities.

First, teachers and students will never get bored. The sheer scope and political significance of the subject matter makes the study of globalisation a dynamic, highly topical and exciting field of inquiry that can be approached from a wide variety of different angles in the social sciences and humanities. There is literally something for everyone. Numbers in my first year introductory subject ‘Global Politics’ at the University of Melbourne have more than doubled in the last five years, with enrolments in second semester 2006 reaching an all time peak of 620. Students welcome the range and diversity of topics to be explored, along with the opportunity to ‘go behind the news’ and develop a deeper understanding of the flux of events and images portrayed in the mass media.

Second, learning about globalisation provides an opportunity for the political and ethical awakening of many students. This can serve as a major motivator to learning. Politically switched-on students develop an appetite for study and an enthusiasm for

critical discussion about global politics. While many students find Australian politics boring, learning about global politics can direct them back to domestic issues, by prompting them to formulate questions about Australian political institutions and political culture. Teachers have a responsibility to expose students to a wide range of different political perspectives and to encourage students to explore their own views and, respectfully, those of others.

Third, the scale and complexity of globalisation studies, and the general problem of infoglut, provide an ideal training ground for the development of skills of critical thinking and analysis that are basic to theory building and evaluation in the social sciences and humanities. A theory is merely a mental framework or map that helps us to decide which facts matter and which do not, and how they relate to each other, and what the consequences might be. They direct us to salient relationships between salient facts and events and thereby help us to process and make sense of what would otherwise be an overwhelming and bewildering amount of information. Far from being abstractions or distractions that take us away from the real world, they are the only means we have to make sense of the world.

In studying globalisation, students can learn to conceptualise different problems at varying levels of abstraction, from concrete phenomenon (e.g., the growth of sweat shops in developing countries or the goods that appear on our supermarket shelves or other retail stores) to middle order abstractions (studies of transnational corporations and the rise of global commodity chains) to highly abstract debates about the deep structure of the global economy, the role of states in the global reorganisation of capitalism, or the broader modernisation process and its discontents.

Ideologies represent a special kind of theoretical framework with important political implications. An ideology is a comprehensive framework or pattern of beliefs that encompasses not only an understanding of how the world works, but also how it *ought* to be. An ideology encompasses a worldview, a particular understanding of human nature and social relationships (including causal relationships) and a set of guiding norms and

values (Steger 2005, 5-8). Ideologies can simplify the world, but they can also distort it in ways that serve particular political interests, power relationships and social structures. Proponents of ideologies seek to persuade (and sometimes manipulate) others of the appropriateness of their way of seeing the world. Ideologies (recognizable by the ‘-ism’ ending) are not necessarily bad – indeed, they are basic to politics and inform the political platforms, and political missions of political parties, social movements, religious movements, corporations, and political organisations (including ‘think tanks’). Liberalism, socialism, nationalism, feminism and environmentalism are all examples of political ideologies, as is globalism – a term often used to describe the dominant global discourse of neoliberalism. However, students need to develop the skills to recognize the distortions, half-truths, historical contexts and facile generalisations that inform many ideologies, along with the consequences of different ideologies from the standpoint of different social classes, identity groups and nations. As Michael Veseth puts it, ‘Anyone who says globalization is all bad or all good is all wrong’ (Veseth, p. 230). Students must likewise learn to recognise ‘globaloney’.

Indeed, all accounts of globalisation (including theories and ideologies) are laced with explicit or implicit evaluations of the phenomenon and this insight should be central to teaching and learning about globalisation. While there are no ‘right’ answers in these evaluative debates, it does not mean that ‘anything goes’. In the case of both theories and ideologies of globalisation, students should be encouraged to:

- identify the purposes and political interests that are served,
- unearth the assumptions on which they are based,
- assess the credibility of the evidence adduced, and
- evaluate critically the overall plausibility of the arguments advanced, including their social and political implications.

These critical skills also assist students in developing their own ideas and arguments.

Finally, the study of globalisation provides an excellent opportunity to teach sound research skills. For example, students must learn not to let Google discriminate on their

behalf. Students can acquire more control once they have a critical appreciation of what Google can do, and what it cannot do. This will enable them to conduct more advanced searches, go beyond page one of the Google results, approach blogs and sponsored sites with caution, and explore a wide variety of other information sources in libraries, many of which may not be available online (Gideon Haigh's essay is not available online). Curiously, many students are fearful of, and overwhelmed by, libraries. Yet the Dewey classification system makes it possible to browse shelves in particular subject areas and discover important sources. Unlike Google, which searches and ranks items based on a keyword or phrase, the Dewey system is conceptual and more likely to point students to relevant sources (which are conveniently shelved together).

#### **4. Approaching globalisation**

There are many points of entry into the sprawling and complex field of globalisation studies, but the events, topics and questions that are of interest to students provide a useful entry point. As a young university student, I enrolled in Law because of the constitutional events of 11 November, 1975. I wanted to understand how and why a Governor-General could sack a Prime Minister in Australia. Likewise, many students enrol in first year global politics at university because of national or international events like the Tampa crisis, the 9/11 terrorist attacks or Bali bombing, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, or because they are either inspired or appalled by anti-globalisation protests at the S11 or G20 meetings held in Melbourne. I suspect Al Gore's documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* will have a similar galvanising effect.

Here I want to draw upon, and extend, a 'curtain-raising' example used by Manfred Steger in his best-selling book *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction* (Steger 2003). Steger shows how detailed critical reflection upon one widely circulated image of Osama bin Laden – the World's Most Wanted Man - provides an opportunity for students to explore the range of different transborder interactions that have come together to produce a single, but powerful image that encapsulates many of the contradictions of

globalisation. The same exercise might be applied to a particular events such as the nuclear weapon test conducted by North Korea in October; a live-Aid concert or an anti-globalisation protest (such as the recent protests and actions against the G20 meeting in Melbourne, including the Make Poverty History Campaign);

The grainy image of Osama bin Laden provided in Figure 1 is a still from a videotape broadcast on 7 October 2001 by Al-Jazeera, on the day the US commenced its bombing campaign against the Taliban in Afghanistan. A range of similar images of bin Laden from this particular videotape can be easily found through a Google image search. Here's what we can see, and learn:

***Elements of the premodern:*** the picture is set in a cave, a hide-out but also a premodern dwelling; bin Laden is wearing traditional Arab head clothing (albeit alongside modern army fatigues).

***Elements of the anti-modern:*** bin Laden's speech involves a simultaneous affirmation of a fundamentalist religious faith and a denunciation of modernity. The world is divided into believers and infidels. There are two quite different transcripts of the speech available on the web,<sup>2</sup> but both accuse the US of moral hypocrisy. Both versions declare that America will never feel safe again and that this is something radical Muslims have experienced for 80 years in the lands of Islam - Palestine, Lebanon etc - and no-one has cared).

***Elements of the modern:*** Although bin Laden denounces the west and the forces of modernity, as Steger points out, his Al Qaeda network makes full use of sophisticated modern technology. In the picture we see an AK-47 Kalashnikov that would have been purchased on the global black market. The gun is Russian in origin (alongside his army fatigues) but could have been manufactured anywhere and now forms part of the arsenal of at least 50 national armies. He is wearing a Timex watch, produced by an American-

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.september11news.com/OsamaSpeeches.htm>

based, multinational company, although much of the production now takes place offshore in low-waged countries (Steger 2003, 2-6).

The video from which the still is taken was broadcast via satellite dish by the Arabic network Al-Jazeera (based in Qatar) and seen by a global audience of millions. Indeed, modern communications technologies have enabled terrorist attacks and staged media statements to become global events. As John Baylis and Steve Smith observe, the number of deaths from the Twin Towers tragedy (around 3,000) does not compare to the numbers that die of poverty on a daily basis, but it was *broadcast live*. The casualties included workers from around 90 countries. The attack was carried out by 19 operatives belonging to the Al Qaeda network which is spread among over 50 countries (Bails and Smith, 2005, 1).

For some observers the 9/11 attacks represented a form of ‘blowback’ for the US – the unintended consequences of earlier US policies, many of which had been kept secret from ordinary Americans (Johnson 2000). The US had funded militant Islamic resistance fighters in Soviet occupied Afghanistan in the 1980s. Osama bin Laden assumed leadership of a group of these resistance fighters in the late 1980s but he did not turn against the US until the stationing of US troops on his native soil of Saudi Arabia during and after the first Gulf War. The Al Qaeda network represents the most extreme kind of reaction to US imperial power. However, the US-led intervention in Iraq, along with US policies in the Middle East, have fueled widespread resentment against the US among many Arab and Muslim countries.

### ***Jihad vs. McWorld?***

Fundamental Islamists such as bin Laden are sometimes seen as encapsulating one of the two contradictory trends of retribalisation and globalisation that have manifested in the post-Cold War period. Benjamin Barber has called these tensions ‘Jihad vs. McWorld’ (Barber 2001).<sup>3</sup> The former seeks to redraw borders (political, ethnic, and religious)

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<sup>3</sup> Thomas Friedman, an international correspondent for the *New York Times*, employs two rather similar metaphors to characterise the contradictory processes of globalisation in his

while the latter seeks to dispense with them. For Barber, both Jihad and McWorld are seductive in their own ways, but both are bad for democracy (McWorld is indifferent while Jihad is hostile).

Barber's notion of McWorld encapsulates four intersecting developments that are trans-national, trans-ideological and trans-cultural. These are the spread of global markets, the increasing consumption of resources, the revolution in information-technology imperative, and the global ecological crisis. These developments have produced new technologies and new forms of wealth but they have also produced a commercialized, homogenized, depoliticized, bureaucratized and ecologically degraded world. Moreover, McWorld is uneven and radically incomplete, with many losing out, giving rise to resentment and bitterness.

Jihad works in the opposite direction, and includes nationalist, ethnic, fundamentalist, religious and separatist movements, which reject (in their various ways) the deadening and culturally indifferent forces of McWorld. However, Jihadists are zealous more than rational. They reject Enlightenment universalism and seek to reassert particularistic identities and communities. The result is fragmentation and disintegration rather than integration.

Yet Barber's analysis of globalism and tribalism is somewhat overdrawn. Moving beyond metaphors, Kevin McDonald suggests that real jihads are best understood as members of a global movement with a global agenda rather than as realists. Many members of terrorist cells are highly mobile and university educated rather than rooted in particular places. Jihads pulls together fractured and disconnected elements from the Islamic tradition to construct new, more abstract global meanings (McDonald 2006). These meanings are constructed via the global media, and they have overshadowed the most awesome of the Hollywood disaster movies with a new kind of reality TV.

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book *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (2002). The Lexus is the symbol of international capital investment and finance, which is rootless and competitive, while the olive tree is the simple of local, rooted traditions and cultures.

### *Cosmopolitanism vs. communitarians as meta-ideologies*

Although Barber may have mis-characterised Jihad, the two contradictory trends of retribalisation and globalisation that he identifies does encapsulate the core ethical and political fault line that has emerged in the wake of globalisation. One noteworthy feature of the politics of globalisation is that pro- and anti-globalisation movements do not map onto the traditional left-right political spectrum. The anti-globalisation movement is especially diverse, encompassing unionists, environmentalists, small farmers, anti-capitalists, Christian patriots and conservative nationalist forces. As Table 1 demonstrates, understanding global politics requires a three-dimensional political spectrum that is able to capture not only egalitarian versus conservative political movements and ideologies but also particularistic, local and protectionist claims as well as internationalist and cosmopolitan ones. Understanding the intersection between traditional left-right ideologies and the meta-ideologies of cosmopolitanism and communitarians helps to make sense of the curious political alliances that have emerged in the pro- and anti-globalisation debate.

Common to all cosmopolitan moral theories is the idea that any political order or action should be judged from a universal and therefore critical standpoint in terms of how the order or action affects individuals - irrespective of their membership in any particular community. For cosmopolitans, all human beings matter morally, and they matter equally, irrespective of nationality, religion, gender and ethnicity. The international human rights regime and the Millennium Development goals represent major international efforts to pursue cosmopolitan ethical goals.

Communitarians are more easily identified by what they are against rather than what they are for. Some are radical while others are conservative. But they are all preoccupied with preserving particularistic communities and identities. Globalisation is seen as a solvent that is eating away at the social bonds of communities. Communitarians believe that communities (whether nation-states, sub-national groupings or Indigenous peoples) should define for themselves rightful conduct in accordance with their own traditions and

customs because moral values grow out of particular communities (Walker 1994). They accuse liberal cosmopolitans of cultural imperialism in foisting their values on incommensurable cultures and failing to respect cultural and religious difference.

Liberal cosmopolitans respond by saying that communitarians tends towards conservatism, lends legitimacy to nationalism and xenophobia, provides no guarantee for the protection of human rights or the environment, and under-estimates the potential for cross-cultural dialogue. They argue that globalisation has undermined national boundaries and created the need for new forms of political accountability that enable all individuals to become world citizens with enforceable rights under a global democratic law (Held 1995; Singer 2002). Democratic communitarians declare that we can never become world citizens and that democracy works best in the vernacular. For his part, Benjamin Barber defends a vision of a confederal world of semi-autonomous communities, smaller than nation-states, tied together by regional markets that would give expression to the green slogan ‘think globally, act locally.’

The debate is far from resolved, yet it central to understanding the political and ethical tensions generated by globalisation.

## **5. Conclusion**

Globalisation is the mother of all social studies topics. It is vast in its scope and complexity and it is deeply contested. Although there is some degree of convergence in thinking in some areas, there is no consensus about some of the most fundamental questions, such as:

- Characterisation: what is it?
- Periodisation: when did it start? Is it new or old?
- Thematisation: how can we unbundle and frame such a multi-faceted phenomenon?

- Causation and explanation: what are the drivers? How do the parts relate to the whole?
- Evaluation: how do we make sense of the whole? What are the implications and consequences of globalisation, globalism and the condition of globality? Are they good or bad (or both)?

Of course, how we analyse and evaluate globalisation is partly dependent on how we define, periodise and thematise it. Different disciplines within the social sciences and humanities tend to be more preoccupied with some of these questions rather than others (Guillén 2001). For historians, a central question is when did it start and what were the antecedents? For international political economists and economic geographers, much of the debate is concerned with whether globalisation is new, whether it is really global? For sociologists, a key question is whether globalisation is different from modernisation. For anthropologists, the key questions include: what is happening to cultures? Is there a global culture in the making (and if so, is it consumerist, liberal cosmopolitan or hybrid)? For political scientists, the key question is what is happening to the state (is it in decline or merely being transformed?), and to political accountability. For moral philosophers, the core question is whether justice can and ought to be pursued on a global scale. This list is by no means exhaustive.

However, it would be wrong to think that different disciplinary answers to these questions form pieces of a jigsaw that can be assembled into a coherent picture. Rather, different disciplines tend to frame both the parts and the whole differently. This explains why an increasing number of globalisation scholars have sought to develop a trans- or inter-disciplinary perspective in order to develop a better appreciation of the elephant, although inevitably certain disciplines are privileged (such as political science, in the case of this presentation).

From a pedagogical point of view, globalisation offers a golden opportunity to teach students about the ways in which different social science disciplines illuminate different

parts of the social world. It also provides an opportunity to highlight the unavailability of theory and its intimate relationship with politics and ethics.

For students, globalisation offers an exciting opportunity to develop an appreciation of the nature of social scientific inquiry, learn sophisticated research techniques, cultivate skills of critical thinking and analysis and develop a global political awareness.

What more can social studies teachers offer?

**Figure 1: Osama bin Laden**



**Table 1: The globalisation political spectrum**

	Left	Right
Cosmopolitan	International NGOs (e.g. Amnesty International, Greenpeace, Oxfam) Bono	Neoliberal economists (e.g., World Bank, IMF) Nike Corporation
Communitarian	Indigenous peoples Some trade unionists Traditional social democrats	Populist/nationalists and neo-fascists Agricultural Protectionists Traditional conservatives

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