



NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION

INTRODUCTION

Isolation, it is often said, is the hallmark of the life of a writer. This is certainly true in my case, because – except when I am travelling – I spend much of my working life sitting before a computer, either at home or in my campus office. Except for my fellow scholars and the students in my classes, I see few people during regular working hours. And yet while I may not see them in person, I am actually connected in ways that are far deeper, wider, and more complex than even a few years ago, or that past generations could have imagined.

- ▶ I can call up vast amounts of information through the internet, and my social media feeds send me a stream of news stories from around the world.
- ▶ I send and receive emails and text messages, or make (free) calls on Skype or WhatsApp, some connecting me to people just down the road, others to people on the other side of the world.
- ▶ I can stream many more movies, TV shows, and music than a human could hope to watch or listen to in a lifetime.
- ▶ I am surrounded by products made all over the world: a smartphone assembled in China, a German car assembled in South Africa, an American computer made in Mexico, and clothes that bear American brand names but were made in Malaysia or Sri Lanka.
- ▶ I can refresh myself periodically with coffee from Colombia or tea from Kenya, and dinner this evening might include pasta from Italy, rice from India, fish from Indonesia, vegetables from Canada, or fruit from Brazil. Or, if the family decides to eat out, we can choose among restaurants nearby serving anything from Chinese to Ethiopian, Greek, Indian, Mexican, Moroccan, or Vietnamese cuisine.

This is all immediate and real evidence of the globalized world in which we live. True, not everyone has access to this variety of options; millions still live in abject poverty, in societies shattered by war, under governments that deny their basic rights, and in urban slums or isolated villages that lack even a reliable supply of clean water. Many are also denied access to modern technology; barely one in five own a road vehicle, and only half of the people in the world have access to the internet at home. In spite of such limitations and inequalities, however, we are all still connected, directly or indirectly, through the political, economic, social, technological and environmental links that have made the world a smaller place. It is these connections that are at the heart of global studies. As we look into its different facets in the chapters that follow, we will be asking many questions. How did these connections evolve? How are they shaped and influenced? Are they good, or bad,



or a mix of both? Do they unite us or divide us? How have they changed our lives? How should we prepare for the future? And what exactly *is* globalization and the global system?

In this book, we will be exploring what such connections mean for our identities, our jobs, our societies, our governments, and our markets. We will look at how populations are changing, how we feed ourselves, how technology is changing, how medical science is evolving, how we govern ourselves, why people migrate, how trade works, how our rights are defined and limited, what is happening to our environment, why we go to war, what is needed to keep us at peace, and whether or not the changes that have come to the global system have made us safer, happier, and healthier.

Before we do that, though, we need to be clear on the meaning of a few key concepts.

WHAT IS GLOBAL STUDIES?

The Chinese philosopher Confucius is reputed to have once said that the beginning of wisdom is to call things by their right name. Whether or not he did, it is certainly hard to understand the world around us unless we agree on the meanings of the terms we use to describe it. Natural scientists have made more progress on this than most, because the terms they use mainly have consistent definitions. In the social sciences and the humanities, though, there is a lot more fluidity, with terms and ideas often open to interpretation, and definitions often contested according to the different perspectives of those doing the defining – we will see plenty of examples of this in the chapters that follow. The problem brings to mind the claim made by Humpty Dumpty in *Through the Looking Glass*: ‘When I use a word ... it means just what I choose it to mean – neither more nor less’.

As a subject, global studies suffers its share of uncertainty, fluidity, and imprecision. Its intellectual roots may be long and deep, but as a distinct field of study it dates back only to the turn of the new millennium, which means that our understanding of its content and outlines is still evolving. To complicate matters, it is made up of many different subjects and ideas, our understanding of which changes with time and with the viewpoints of those who assess them. And to complicate matters even further, global studies is easily confused with four other concepts, each of which we need to tie down.

First, there is **international studies**, focused on the interactions between two or more countries and on what these countries share or have in common. (To be pedantic, it should really be *interstate studies*, since the term *international* is usually used in the context of states, not nations. There will be more on this problem in Chapter 5.) Although international studies looks beyond state borders, it remains founded on states, the prefix *inter-* originating from the Latin word for ‘between’ or ‘among’. If we study something happening within a single state, then our interest is national or domestic, but as soon as we start looking at states in relation to one another, we move into the realms of the international. Our interest might be in how states interact with one another, or we might be interested in making comparisons among them. Either way, the *international* part of this stops short of the holistic approach that characterizes global studies.

For its part, the word *studies* implies that our interests are broad, and might range from the historical to the political, economic, legal, social, cultural, religious, scientific, technological, linguistic, and environmental. Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2013) jokingly notes the suggestion that we should avoid investigating subjects whose title includes the word *studies*, because it suggests a lack of the kind of structure and depth we find in a formal discipline, such as history, political science, or economics. He also points out that the use of the word – as in *global studies*, *gender studies*, *media studies*, and so on – has been a relatively recent development, but this should not imply that any of these fields of research is any less interesting or important than the disciplines that preceded them. He rightly warns that newness can mean greater unevenness and a looser understanding of the focus of a field, but he fails to point out that newness also implies possibilities: global studies has made great strides in its short life, and is wide open in terms of its potential.

The second concept to tie down is **international relations**. As usually applied and understood, it is more limited than international studies because it focuses on the political and economic interactions between states. In some countries, international relations (or IR, as it is known) is considered a sub-field of political science, where it is both related to (but contrasted with) the sub-field of comparative politics. In other countries, it is a free-standing discipline. Either way, it is interested in topics such as diplomacy, war, peace, security, international organization, and foreign policy. In contrast to the broader idea of *studies*, the narrower idea of *relations* implies a specific interest in how states relate to one another. Some, though (such as Barnett and Sikkink, 2011), see evidence that IR has moved in recent decades towards a new interest in the global as opposed to merely the international.

Figure 0.1: Key concepts in global studies

TERM	MEANING
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES	The study of interactions, comparisons and commonalities involving two or more states.
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	The study of (mainly) political and economic interactions between or among states, with a focus on diplomacy and policy.
GLOBALIZATION	The process by which the political, economic, social, and cultural links between people, corporations, and governments in different states become integrated through cooperation, trade, travel, communications, media, investment, market forces, and technology.
GLOBALISM	A philosophy, ideology or policy based on taking a global view of politics, economics, society, security and the environment.

The third concept is **globalization**, which is distinct from international studies or relations in the sense that it describes a process: one in which the links between people, institutions, and governments in different parts of the world have evolved



and deepened. This has resulted – as Robertson (1992) puts it – in ‘both the compression of the world and the intensification of the consciousness of the world as a whole’. Globalization is both a cause and an effect, and – as with all terms that have the suffix *-ization* (such as *democratization*, *Europeanization*, and *polarization*) – it describes a phenomenon that is always moving and evolving, and is neither static nor final. It is important to note that while globalization is usually associated with political and economic change, it actually applies to almost every facet of human endeavour, including culture, religion, science, and health. It is even more important to note that while the term comes up frequently in the chapters that follow, this is not a book about globalization.

The fourth and final concept is **globalism**, which is an ideology, a set of beliefs, or an attitude that favours a global view on politics, economics and society, and supports the kinds of trends we find in globalization. In contrast to nationalists, who see the world from the perspective of their home countries, and place the interests of those countries first, globalists see the world as a whole, arguing that national interests add up to global interests, and that global interests help shape national interests. In spite of the criticism directed by many nationalist movements against globalism in recent years (spearheaded by leaders such as Donald Trump in the United States, Vladimir Putin in Russia, and Narendra Modi in India), the two ideas are not mutually exclusive, and nationalist criticisms of globalism as elitist and anti-democratic threats to national sovereignty miss much of the story. It is possible to simultaneously pursue local, national and global views (see Rosenboim, 2017).

All of this brings us back finally to the meaning of global studies. Where *international* literally means *between* nations (or states), the word *global* implies a more holistic and transnational view of the world. In other words, it is concerned with the world as a whole. If all other perspectives are partial, separated or contained, global perspectives are aggregated, combined, and connected. State borders cannot be ignored, to be sure, but global studies is concerned with matters that are of common interest to us all, regardless of those borders. Human rights, for example, are the rights that all of us have by virtue of being human, and they rise above citizenship of a particular country or community. Migration is not something that is limited to a particular time or place; it has happened throughout human history, and continues to happen today, for different reasons and with different results. And when air pollution causes changes in the earth’s climate, we are all affected, regardless of any identity we might have other than simply being human.

If you are using this book, you are probably enrolled in a course or a module whose title includes some combination of the words *international*, *global*, and/or *globalization*, and that may be offered by a department, a programme or a school of either international studies, global studies, or both. These possibilities tell you something about the unsettled nature of the field. You would see even more possibilities with just a quick scan of the titles of other textbooks in this field, which include not just *global studies* and/or *international studies*, but sometimes spill over into *global issues*. And the list expands still further if you look at the contents of these books, which reveal an overlap between international, regional and global studies, and a wide range of possible topics. In preparing to write this book, I looked carefully at all the others on the subject, and found that no two covered the same ground. The most



common topics were economics, population, culture, war, and health, followed by history, government, human rights, and the environment. Meanwhile, several books were each unique in addressing geography, foreign policy, technology, crime, and terrorism.

Unconcerned and undeterred by such mixed signals, this book defines **global studies** as follows:

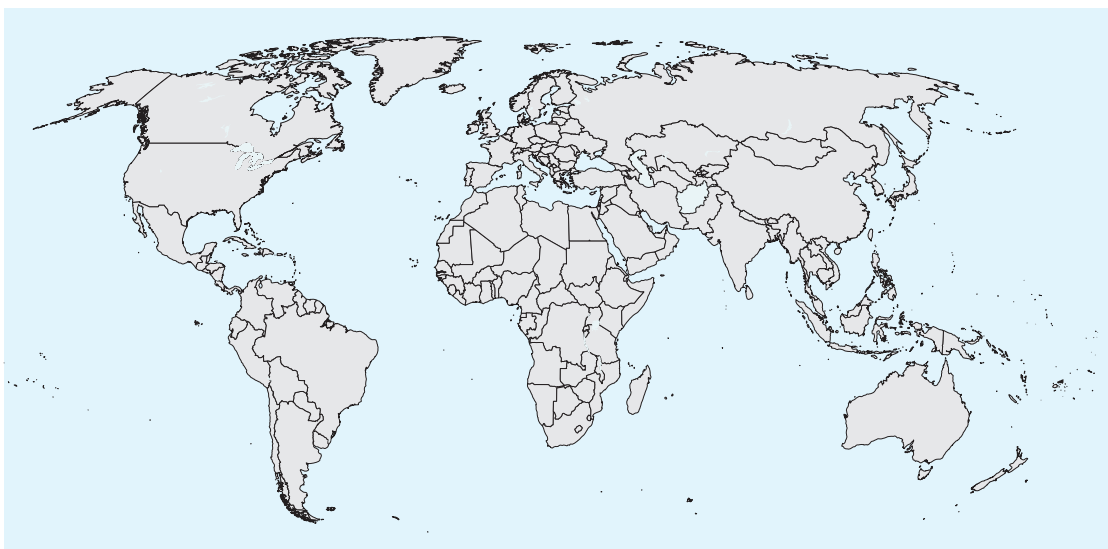
The systematic study of the global system and of its related features, qualities, trends, institutions, processes, and problems.

The **global system**, meanwhile, which is a term that appears often in the chapters that follow, can be defined as follows:

The collected elements and components – including people, institutions, principles, procedures, norms and habits – whose interactions make up the global whole.

In the world of global studies, we are ultimately interested in understanding how the global system is constructed and how it works. We are focusing on the logical final point in a progression that begins with the individual and moves through the familial to the communal, the local, the national, the regional, and the international. In its efforts to understand global connections and phenomena, global studies has four important qualities:

- ▶ It is *transnational*, meaning that it is concerned with events, ideas, activities, and phenomena that are not limited by state boundaries. To be sure, global studies is grounded in the local, the national, and the international, which is why Map 0.1 shows the world, but also indicates the states with which most of us most readily identify, and at which level most of the decisions that most immediately impact us are made. Global studies takes the discussion about these decisions to the transnational level.



Map 0.1: The world



- ▶ It is *integral*, meaning that it is concerned more with what unites us than with what divides us, and with the manner in which decisions are shaped and implemented at the global level. We will see that all states are influenced by the actions of other states, that economies are impacted by cross-border investment and trade, and that cultures borrow from one another, promoting a sense of global consciousness. But it is our interconnectedness and interdependence that interests us when we take the global view.
- ▶ It is *inclusive*, meaning that it does not see the world from the perspective of any one group of people, but works to engage with the multiple perspectives of the entire human race. As we will see in Chapter 3, the term *ethnocentrism* is usually used to describe the phenomenon of looking at other cultures according to the values and standards of one's own, and even perhaps believing in their relative inferiority. But it also includes the more general idea of taking a narrow and exclusive view of everything we see. In contrast to the ethnocentric (or the nationalist), global studies is interested in taking an inclusive view, in fostering a sense of global literacy, awareness and belonging, and in helping us all better understand our place within a diverse global community.
- ▶ It is *interdisciplinary*, meaning that it looks at the world from the perspective of multiple disciplines, including history, geography, sociology, anthropology, demography, science, technology, politics, law, and economics. Although this book has 12 apparently separate chapters, none of the topics with which they deal are isolated, and they constantly overlap. There is a chapter on human rights, for example, but those rights – and the persistent problems of inequality – are threads that can be found woven throughout the book, and within each of its individual chapters. And there is a chapter on the environment, but environmental problems are intimately related to science, politics, law and economics.

The world is so big and diverse that we can never fully grasp how people of different nationalities, religions, cultures, educational backgrounds, and economic situations see it, but global studies can help us find our way through the maze. Consider the Indian parable of the blind men and the elephant: in order to learn what it looks like, they assign themselves to different parts of the animal, which they touch with their hands before comparing notes. They disagree about what the part they have touched tells them about the whole, but if they ask the help of others, they gather more information, their perspectives widen, and they build a more accurate picture of what the elephant looks like. Global studies works in a similar way by combining multiple perspectives on the world, helping us more accurately describe the qualities and dimensions of the global whole.

THE WORLD AS A COMMUNITY OF 100 PEOPLE

The focus of our interest is nothing less than the entire world. However, it is a big and complex place, and grasping its dimensions and diversity is not easy. It contains about 7.5 billion people living in almost 200 independent states, identifying with numerous nationalities and ethnicities, speaking thousands of languages and dialects, following dozens of different religions, and interacting both directly and indirectly through constantly changing webs of interests, needs, and opportunities. It would be impossible for any of us – even if we travelled widely and spoke multiple languages –



to come fully to grips with all this diversity. One way of working around this problem is to reduce the world to more digestible proportions by thinking of the world as a community of 100 people. This is what it reveals:

There is an even split between men and women. This should come as no surprise, because nature will make sure that there is a balance between the two. But within those numbers there are important trends: higher male mortality, for example, means that as populations age, the number of women increases relative to men. Men and women also differ in terms of their social roles, their economic status, and their political power.

Asians dominate. There are about 60 Asians in the community, living alongside 15 Africans, 14 people from the Americas, and 11 from Europe. Despite the preponderance of Chinese, Indians, Indonesians, Japanese, and Koreans (among others), the community is still very much defined and influenced by its Western minority, and the focus of political and economic power has long rested with Europeans and North Americans. This is changing, though, as the number, wealth and global influence of Asia grows.

Many languages are spoken. Although English is the language that most people in the community use to communicate, particularly those who are better educated, only 5 people are native speakers. About 12 speak different forms of Chinese, and 5 speak Spanish, but the remaining 78 speak a multitude of languages, and most are unable to communicate with anyone else other than indirectly, or through a basic version of English. Those who speak English find they can mingle more widely and build stronger ties with the community, while those who cannot find themselves at a disadvantage.

The community is aging. Thanks to better health care and nutrition, people are living longer, although there are many internal differences. Of the 100, 26 are aged 14 or younger, and 9 are 65 or older, leaving nearly two-thirds of the community within the optimum age range to work and to have and raise children. The median age of the community is 28, although the North Americans, the Chinese, and the Europeans are older on average (35 and above), while the Africans and Middle Easterners are the youngest on average (20 and below).

Democracy for the minority. Only about 40 people in the community live under democratic systems of decision-making, while the remaining 60 still languish under authoritarian rule. Most of those living under democracy are European, North and South American, and Indian, while the Chinese and Russian members of the community – along with most of its Middle Eastern and African members – struggle to make themselves freely heard, and find their rights routinely limited. Those who live under democracy worry increasingly about the quality of their influence, and throughout the community there is speculation about inequality, elitism, and a lack of accountability and transparency.

A small minority controls most of the wealth. Although the community has more than doubled the value of its economic output since 2000, just 17 members account for more than 60 per cent of that output, and 20 of them consume almost 90 per cent of its resources; these are almost all Europeans, North Americans, East Asians, and Australasians. The 18 Chinese members of the community are catching up fast, though, and exerting influence more widely. About 80 members of the community live on less than \$10 per day, while 10 live in extreme poverty, barely scraping by on less than \$1.90 per day.

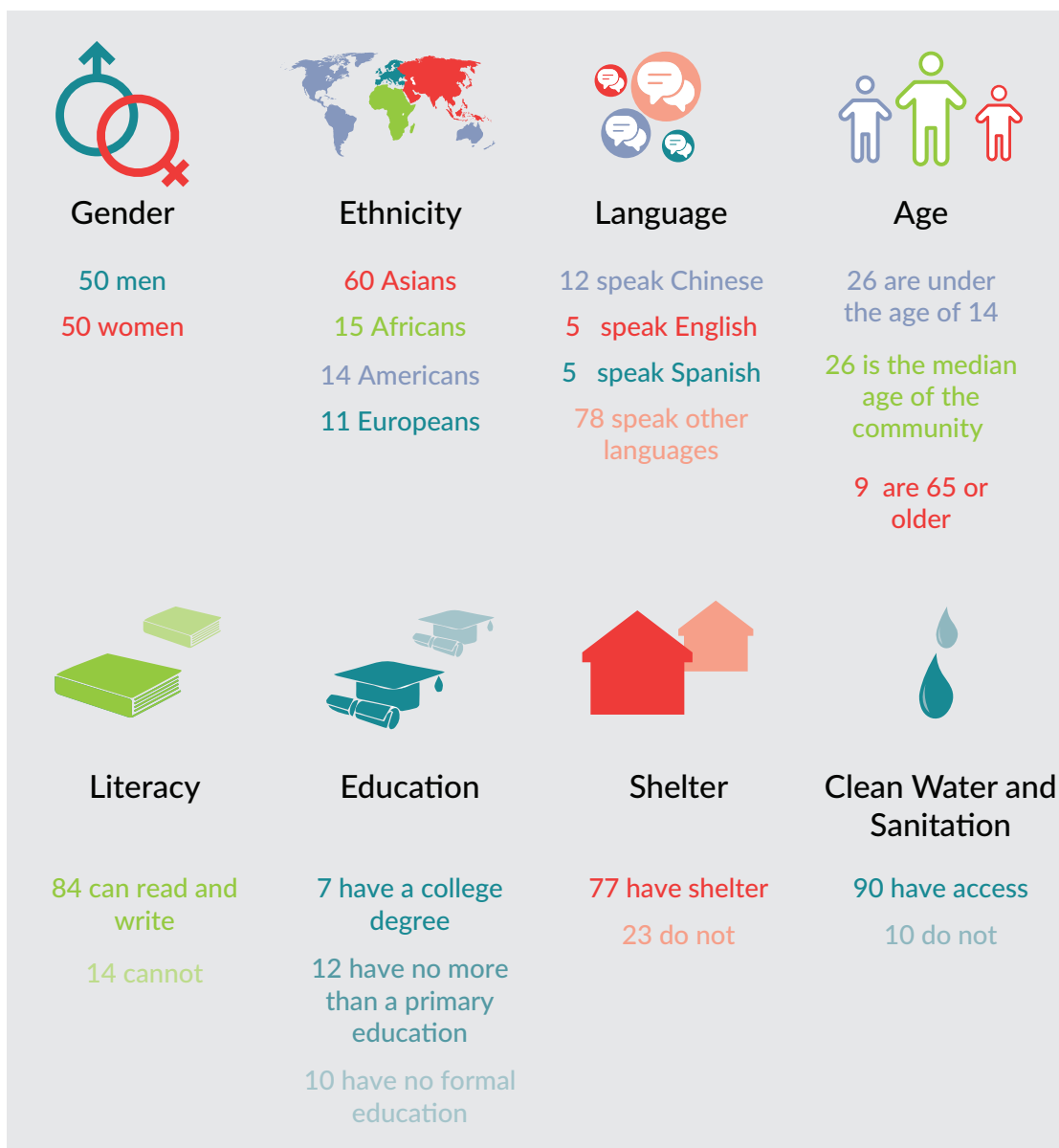


Figure 0.2: The world as a community of 100 people

Compiled from sources used in the chapters that follow.

Urban areas dominate. Until recently, most of the people in the community lived in its rural areas, but there has been a steady drift over the decades to its urban areas, where 54 people now live. Many of those 54 remain poor and marginalized, while a central elite has accumulated most of the wealth and the power and consumes most of its resources. Meanwhile, many of those in the rural areas must rely on subsidies in order to grow the food on which the community relies.

Unequal access to education. Only 7 people in the community have a university degree, while – at the other end of the scale – 12 are unable to read or write. The community is better



educated than at any time in its history, and education is helping level the economic and social differences within the community, but higher education is still the privilege of a small minority, and remains tied to higher levels of wealth and better opportunities.

A large minority lacks shelter. While 77 of the members of the community have shelter (some of it sophisticated and well supported by utilities and services), the remaining 23 have none. Even for many of those with shelter, it is less than ideal, often consisting of slum dwellings and shanties with high crime rates and poor connections to basic services. Most people in the community have access to clean water and sanitation, but about 10 people do not, leaving them more susceptible to the resulting health problems.



Few members of the community eat well. About 30 of the members of the community have enough to eat, 13 of them so much so that they have become obese. Meanwhile, about 50 are malnourished and 20 are undernourished, many among the latter suffering from starvation. The problem is less one of supply than of distribution; the community has more than enough resources to feed itself, but its poorer parts have less access to supplies, which are often interrupted by conflict.

Access to health care is unequal. Although the health of the community overall has improved, not everyone has benefitted. In its wealthier parts, members can expect to live into their seventies and even their early eighties, and to have access to fine health care. In its poorer parts, life expectancy may be in the forties or the fifties.

Unequal internet connection. The wealthier and better served members of the community mainly have ready access to the internet, on which they rely for an increasing number of services and for almost all their information. But half of the members of the community remain unconnected, and are thereby denied the knowledge, information, convenience and access that come with being part of this critical network.

Many religions are followed. The community is far from united in its religious beliefs. Thanks to the influence of its Christian members, and their missionary achievements, Christianity has had an important role in the history of the community. But while nearly one-third of its members formally think of themselves as Christian, many of them are drifting away from organized religion. Meanwhile, the number of those who are Muslim is growing fast, about one-third of the members of the community subscribe to other religions, and 16 have no religion at all.

Of course, there is only so far that we can take the analogy with a community of 100 people, because in the real world the population continues to grow (it has doubled in size just since 1970) and most of its internal ratios are constantly changing. Even so, these numbers give us an idea of the diversity of the global system, and of the considerable inequalities that continue to persist within that system in spite of the enormous strides that have been made over recent decades in economic productivity, education, the provision of basic services, and technology.

SOME NOTES ON THIS BOOK'S APPROACH

Before moving on, four points will be helpful in understanding the approach taken by this book.

First, it is – above all – an introductory textbook designed for students coming to the topic of global studies with little background, in a variety of different settings and countries, and most of whom will be taking their first module or course on the topic. It grew out of the needs and preferences of my own students, who were valuable if unwitting guinea pigs for the approaches taken in the chapters that follow. Everything was tested on them before it appeared in this book, and they helped me determine what should be included and excluded. Because it is introductory, it sets out to cover the entire field of global studies, which means an emphasis on breadth over depth. Think of it as a sampler dish, offering a taste of the variety of topics within global studies, each of which can be covered in more depth using more specialized sources and bodies of literature. Also, because it is introductory, it sets



out to include as many perspectives as possible, although focused positions are taken throughout the book.

Second, I have titled each chapter with selected key words, carefully chosen to encapsulate a variety of connected topics contained within each chapter. Chapter 4, for example, is titled ‘Science and technology’, but it is about a variety of topics found at the intersection of science and technology; hence it looks at health care, infectious disease, the digital revolution, and at changes in communication and transportation. At the same time, other chapters in the book cover topics that also relate to science – consider population growth, trade, and the environment, for example – so Chapter 4 is not the end of the discussion. This is where we see the kinds of connections that are at the heart of global studies.

Third, in a book that takes the broad and introductory view, generalizations are often necessary. They have the disadvantage of sacrificing precision, but they have the advantage of providing the shortcuts that are sometimes needed to make larger points. The most potentially troublesome generalization made in the chapters that follow is the division of the world into two communities based on a mix of political, economic and social features: the North (more democratic, wealthier and post-industrial states) and the South (less democratic, poorer and/or industrializing states). Most states fit squarely within one of these groups, but others do not, and this point is always worth remembering. Not everyone will like the use of these labels, which critics dismiss as outmoded, but they can be useful as a guide through a complex global community. More nuanced political categories are discussed in Chapter 5, and more nuanced economic categories in Chapter 8.

Finally, because this is a book about global studies, it is obviously important that it should take a global view. In some ways, the book itself stands as a microcosm of the global at work: it is written in English by an American-based author who is British-born, Kenyan-raised, and has citizenship of the US and the UK. It is published by a German-owned company headquartered in the UK (with offices in many countries), the production overseen by an American development editor, an Irish production editor and a copy editor in New Zealand, with the finished book printed on paper sourced in the Netherlands. As a repeat-migrant, and someone who sees himself as a global citizen, I have made a particular effort not to see everything from a Western perspective. However, as a Westerner who draws heavily off research and data generated mainly by other Westerners and made available through Western publishers, I find this sometimes easier said than done. The book also combines international and comparative perspectives: global studies is just as much interested in how communities relate to one another as with how they compare with one another.

KEY CONCEPTS

- ▶ Global studies
- ▶ Globalism
- ▶ International relations
- ▶ Global system
- ▶ Globalization
- ▶ International studies

USEFUL WEBSITES

Global Studies Association at <https://globalstudiesassoc.wordpress.com>

Global Studies Consortium at <http://globalstudiesconsortium.org>

World Bank Development Indicators at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator>

(Note: The Victorian British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli is credited with having once railed against 'three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics'. Sources of data will always be contested, but I have long chosen – wisely or unwisely – to have faith in the World Bank, which maintains a website that includes data on a wide variety of topics, much of it credited to other UN agencies. They, in turn, usually rely heavily on national governments. Unless otherwise specified, most of the data in this book come from that source.)

FURTHER READING

Anheier, Helmut K., and Mark Juergensmeyer (eds) (2012) *Encyclopaedia of Global Studies* (Sage).

A four-volume edited encyclopaedia with numerous entries dealing in detail with many aspects of global studies.

Smith, Dan (2012) *The Penguin State of the World Atlas*, 9th edn (Penguin). Although not an example of global studies as such, this is nonetheless a useful and provocative visual summary of current events and global trends.

Juergensmeyer, Mark (ed.) (2014) *Thinking Globally: A Global Studies Reader* (University of California Press) and Manfred B. Steger (ed.) (2015) *The Global Studies Reader* (Oxford University Press).

Two collections of useful readings from multiple authors, offering different perspectives on global studies.

Steger, Manfred B., and Amentahru Wahlrab (2017) *What is Global Studies? Theory and Practice* (Routledge). A survey of the field, showing its links with globalization, and outlining its key principles.

A single issue of the journal *Globalizations* from 2013 contains a forum involving scholars discussing the meaning and the purpose of global studies. Particularly interesting is the lead paper in the set – Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2013) 'What is Global Studies?' in *Globalizations* 10:4, pp. 499–514 – and a later issue of the same journal – Mark Juergensmeyer (2013) 'What is Global Studies?' in *Globalizations* 10:6, pp. 765–9.

ACADEMIC JOURNALS

The following are some of the major academic journals dealing with global studies and globalization.

Asia Journal of Global Studies

<http://www.aags.org>

Global Affairs

<http://www.tandfonline.com>

Global Challenges	http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com
Global Environmental Politics	http://www.mitpressjournals.org
Global Governance	https://www.riener.com
Global Media and Communication	http://journals.sagepub.com
Global Networks	http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com
Global Policy	http://www.globalpolicyjournal.com
Global Social Policy	http://journals.sagepub.com
Global Society	http://www.tandfonline.com
Global Studies Journal	http://onglobalization.com/journal
Global Studies Law Review	http://openscholarship.wustl.edu/law_globalstudies
Globalization and Health	https://globalizationandhealth.biomedcentral.com
Globalizations	http://www.tandfonline.com
Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power	http://www.tandfonline.com
Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies	http://ijgls.indiana.edu
Journal of Global Analysis	http://cesran.org/globalanalysis
Journal of Global Ethics	http://www.tandfonline.com
Journal of Global Health	https://globalizationandhealth.biomedcentral.com
Journal of Global History	https://www.cambridge.org
Journal of Globalization and Development	https://www.degruyter.com
New Global Studies	https://www.degruyter.com
Transcience	http://www.transcience-journal.org