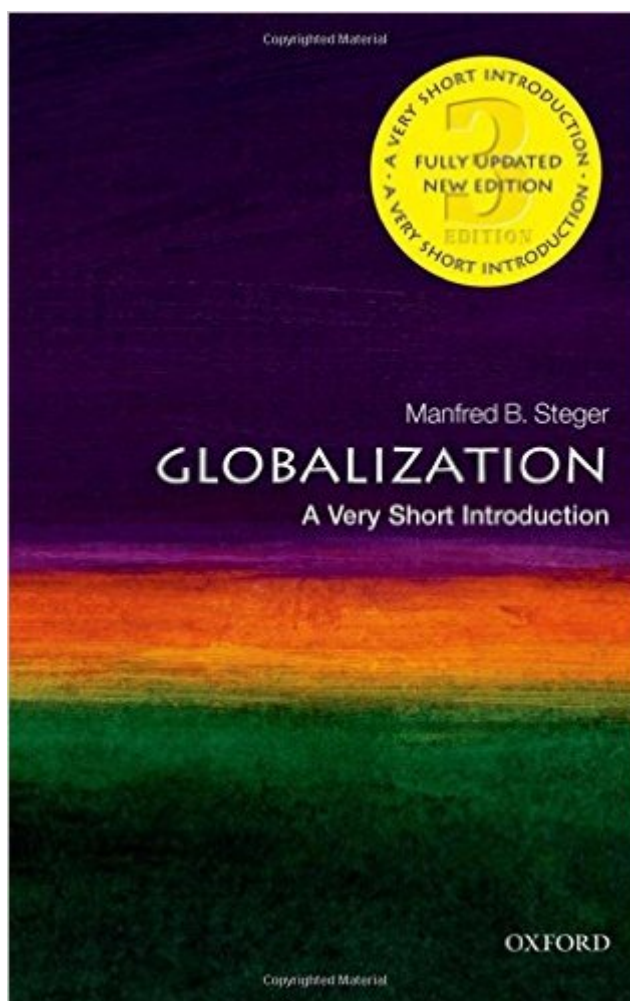


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Globalization: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)



Synopsis

Globalization has become one of the defining buzzwords of our time--a term that describes a variety of complex economic, political, cultural, ideological, and environmental forces that are rapidly altering our experience of the world. In clear, accessible language, Manfred B. Steger goes beyond a narrow economic focus to cover all the major causes and consequences of globalization as well as the hotly contested question of whether globalization is, ultimately, a good or a bad thing. This new edition has been fully updated, incorporating all the major global developments in the past four years, including the 2008-2010 global financial crisis, the 2011 Japanese earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster, the 2011 killing of Osama bin Laden, the on-going revolutions in the Middle East, and the rise of social networking such as Facebook and Twitter. The book also examines political movements both for and against globalization, from WTO protests to the rise in global jihadism; considers such concepts as "Americanization" and "McDonaldization"; and explores the role of the media and communication technologies in the process of cultural globalization. Finally, Steger explains in accessible language the connection between economic globalization and multinational corporations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization. About the Series: Oxford's Very Short Introductions series offers concise and original introductions to a wide range of subjects--from Islam to Sociology, Politics to Classics, Literary Theory to History, and Archaeology to the Bible. Not simply a textbook of definitions, each volume in this series provides trenchant and provocative--yet always balanced and complete--discussions of the central issues in a given discipline or field. Every Very Short Introduction gives a readable evolution of the subject in question, demonstrating how the subject has developed and how it has influenced society. Eventually, the series will encompass every major academic discipline, offering all students an accessible and abundant reference library. Whatever the area of study that one deems important or appealing, whatever the topic that fascinates the general reader, the Very Short Introductions series has a handy and affordable guide that will likely prove indispensable.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This slim 137-page volume is penned by Manfred Steger, Professor of Political Science at the University of Hawaii and author of more than 20 books on the subject of globalization. He's also Research Leader of the Globalization and Culture Program at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, where he's Professor of Global Studies. The book was updated and revised in May 2013. With these impeccable academic credentials, the author knows his stuff and manages to condense this vast subject down to 8 succinct chapters each focusing on a different aspect of the subject: the economic, political, cultural, ecological and (perhaps the most interesting chapter) ideological dimensions of the process. In an early chapter Steger defines some common terms used in the debate and outlines the argument that 'globalization' is not really a new phenomenon but can be seen as part of a gradual process over the past 10,000 years, whereby ideas born in one part of the world (the invention of the wheel or of writing, for example) have over time been adopted by neighbouring societies and become at least widespread, even though their adoption might be prevented from becoming truly 'global' by the geographical remoteness of some regions. The perception of globalization as a uniquely modern phenomenon born of the age of passenger-air travel and global electronic communications is flawed, claims Steger: it is more useful to see the current phase of an increasingly interconnected world as just the latest in an inevitable process.

I have read several Oxford University Very Short Introduction books. This one was interesting but also disappointing as it was too brief and unnecessarily biased without supporting data. Unlike Joseph Stiglitz or Thomas Friedman, this author defines globalization beyond economic forces briefly summarizing economic, political, cultural, ecological and ideological impacts of globalization. He identifies why these forces are important but lack equal impact or value. Oddly, he overlooks technology and the rapid pace of change. Sometimes he provides supportive examples and references. Too often, he makes unsubstantiated socialist rants never supported with examples or references. The sudden change in writing style is abrupt and difficult to overlook. Lastly, he fluffs

nearly a third of the book highlighting a WTO protest in Seattle (inconsequential) and the War on Terror because of 9/11 (impact to banking felt world-wide yet undiscussed). Although the author is clearly well-read, his work reads like an amateur that has limited travel to high society regions of English-speaking countries. He has limited understanding of life beyond a post industrialist democratic society that encourages free trade, education and scientific thinking. While he shares these values and would willingly promote democracy as an export, he also has a naive hippie agenda that claims we would all work really well together if only the bad capitalists were forced to behave. I doubt he has even chatted with citizens of developing countries (language barrier) in order to learn their point of view or view of themselves in history.

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