

be able to assess the extent to which foreign policy has or has not changed in the face of global economic transformations. Such reflection is not merely a game of semantics; the way we understand globalization and what it might be profoundly affects our conception of the space for political action. More significantly, the way in which the discourse of globalization is articulated informs our conception of what is political in the first place, that is, it sets the boundaries for the terrain of foreign policy making by identifying what constitutes the 'legitimate' subject matter of politics and thus, of foreign policy.

With respect to Canadian foreign policy, then, what is most instructive is the way in which representations of globalization as a necessary and inevitable reality of the late twentieth century have exacerbated the existing tendency to de-politicize foreign economic policy (and economic policy more generally). Where it has always been useful for capitalists to claim an empirical distinction between the political and the economic, at no time is that distinction so much lived in practice and meaning as it is now. At the same time, however, the more the discourse surrounding globalization insists on its apolitical nature, the greater the likelihood for political reaction by those 'outside' the 'legitimate' political terrain. The discourse surrounding globalization delimits what is legitimate politics (for example, limiting the state's capacity to intervene in the market), and makes alternative conceptualizations difficult to articulate, and even more difficult to understand. Yet, these are the stresses that confront Canadian foreign policy in an era of globalization; stresses born of increased social and political consensus on the one hand, and yet of growing social fissures on the other.

Defining globalization

In the attempt to take globalization seriously, some attention has to be paid to defining how globalization is understood, in itself, not an easy task. As Richard Barnett