effect relationship means that the book is a poor one, and a poor book not just for academic readers but for general readers too. Popular history books, popular science books, indeed books in whichever category one wishes to allocate this interdisciplinary work still have the duty to explain, and to explain the phenomena under discussion in ways which expose their readers to alternative views. Climate change in the sixth century affected lots of things and it certainly did alter the political and social balance of various empires and kingdoms. But have things simply stopped happening since the sixth century? Has nothing else occurred in the intervening centuries that might also have contributed to making the modern world the place that it is today?

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Keith Suter’s sixty page booklet provides a useful outline of globalisation, a term nearing the semantic vacuity of postmodernism in its overuse. As we are daily reminded in the media, globalisation is an inescapable fact for anyone living in a post-industrial society. Increasingly, globalisation ensnares those beyond the affluent societies driving the process. Suter begins with the premise that globalisation is not about to disappear and that the major challenge facing those concerned with its impacts is in making it a kinder, gentler force. The myriad superficialities of a globalised world are familiar to most, Suter roll-calls the usual suspects: McDonalds, Coke, Madonna, American soap operas. Delve into the kaleidoscopic memory bank of the media-soaked modern mind and you can find Amazon indigenes with mobile phones, Tibetan monks watching World Cup soccer on TV, German musicians paying homage to Jamaican music producers deeply indebted to spaghetti western themes. It is not just the West that benefits from McLuhan’s incredible shrinking world, according to some at least.

The title In Defence of Globalisation entraps the reader into expecting an argument echoing the populist liberalism of Thomas Friedman, or possibly a further extension to the post-Fukuyama canon. Suter sidesteps and extricates his case from the polarised debates so prevalent in much of the discussion about the issue. He constructs an argument that averts the broad generalities of ‘liberalised trade versus protectionism’ or ‘the environment versus progress’ by defining three types of globalisation: ‘economic’, ‘popular’ and ‘public order.’ Throughout the text Suter seems to be rolling
his sleeves up and digging in for the long haul: ‘We need to find ways of making lemonade out of this lemon.’ His basic acceptance of the prevailing mode of economic organisation, the dominance of transnational corporations and a consumer society, is tempered by a belief in the reforming capacities of ‘popular’ globalisers such as non-governmental organisations like Greenpeace and ‘public order’ globalisation.

While not engaging with the strident ‘end of nation-state’ rhetoric, Suter does see certain processes of globalisation as eroding some traditional elements of nation-state sovereignty. In particular, he identifies the effects of rapid, high volume transnational capital flows and communication technology as major factors in the ongoing evolution of the nation-state in what Suter regards as a post-Westphalian world. This evolutionary redefining of the nation-state as a political unit can be seen in the economic neo-liberalism of British and American reactions to an economic system which had to restructure after the demise of the Bretton Woods regime in the early 1970s. The trend in the last decade of searching for a ‘third way’ is further proof of government concern over how a state is to be defined and what its role is to be.

A welcome part of In Defence of Globalisation is its attempt to locate globalisation in an historical context or continuum. Obviously, the length of the text curtails any discursive or comprehensive approach to topics like the importance of the Westphalian System, but Suter sketches the outlines, which give the reader a sense of globalisation being an historically-grounded phenomenon, rather than something that just crawled from the deep to terrorise an unsuspecting world.

Interestingly, Suter apportions some blame for public anxiety about globalisation to the fixation by media and governments with Cold War concerns at the expense of the contemporaneous ‘contribution of the less glamorous functional cooperation’, evident through organisations like the World Health Organisation and the International Telecommunications Union. Suter sees these as the deeper currents leading to the present-day experience of globalisation. The argument could also be made that contemporary globalisation is unthinkable without the input of Cold War-derived technologies (Internet, satellite), structures, and modes of production. The ‘triumph’ of liberal democratic ideals, which so informs the philosophical base of current globalisation processes, is the result of forty years of ideological attrition known as the Cold War.

Suter’s desire to file the jagged edges off economic globalisation by employing the reformative influence of non-governmental organisations and international groupings is outlined in the chapter ‘Taking on the Corporations.’ Like the rest of the booklet, the chapter offers a reasoned approach to the central problem of balancing social justice with economic growth. Suter has commendably tried to find practical ways in which people can reclaim what many feel they have lost, a sense of control and destiny. With measures like ethical investment programs, expanding democratic
participation via new technology, and redefining state roles and responsibilities, Suter cautiously hopes for a future that, while not utopic, manages to avoid the post-millennial dystopias forecast by more fervent critics of globalisation.

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Peter Allen’s *Wages of Sin* is an interesting exploration of the ways in which certain diseases through history have been perceived to be punishments for sinful behaviour, with their connection to sex and morality. Allen surveys those moments in history that popularly represent the ‘underside’ of approaches to disease, and the damage wrought by involving moral concerns with medical concerns. This book is not a comprehensive history, but a series of ‘portraits of disease’, which Allen arranges in rough chronological order (p. xxiii). Allen’s book reads at times as an unfolding drama about ‘bad’ doctors and moralists, and those well-meaning, and is full of gory descriptions of such things as the physically devastating effects of mercury treatments for syphilis, torturous nineteenth-century restraining devices used to stop masturbation, and the ritual through which lepers were banished in medieval Europe through enacting their funerals whilst they were still alive.

Allen begins his discussion by exploring ‘lovesickness’ in the Middle Ages, a ‘disease’ which medical writers of the late antiquity and Islamic middle ages were heavily concerned with, and for which sex was the recommended therapy (p. 7). Allen argues that lovesickness was an early manifestation of the divide between those who worried mostly about the body and those whose greatest concern was the soul. It is the exploration of this dichotomy that frames Allen’s discussion of later diseases throughout the proceeding chapters.

The narrative then skips to medieval leprosy, and the discussion focuses on the belief at the time that leprosy came straight from God to punish humanity for its sins. Allen surveys the process through which lepers were ostracised throughout European communities, with particular emphasis on the early medical establishment of the leper hospital. He makes an interesting comparison between the medieval responses to lepers with those of AIDS patients in American hospitals today. Equally disturbing