

The “global” in the social sciences and humanities

Key Points

- Understanding global issues requires an understanding of both the physical and life sciences and the social sciences and humanities
- The importance of agency and agents at the individual, group/state, and global level
- The importance of the “spirit of the times”

What does “global” mean?

- The planet earth is a single unit or space
- Global issues transcend humanity and human society
- Human activity is having global effects: global issues are affecting human activity

What does “global” mean?

- Global Warming
- Global Health
- The Global Goals for Sustainable Development
- The Global 100
- The Global Drug Trade
- The Global Fund
- Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative
- Global Citizenship

Where does “global” come from?

- What is the history of the “global”?

The History of the “Global”

- Migration of Homo Sapiens 50,000 years ago: “proto-globalization”
- Spread of the world religions
- Spread of trade

The History of the “Global”

- **1492** German geographer Martin Behaim builds the first globe.
- **1522** first circumnavigation of the earth
- **1851** first world's fair
- **1865** creation of first global regulatory agency (International Telegraph Union)
- **1866** first permanent transoceanic telegraph cable
- **1884** first global co-ordination of clocks (GMT)
- **1930** first global radio broadcast (King George V opens the London Naval Conference)

The History of the “Global”

- **1940** first MacDonald’s restaurant
- **1944** The word “globalize” appears in Mirriam Webster Dictionary
- **1957** first intercontinental ballistic missiles
- **1962** launch of first communications satellite
- **1963** first direct dialing of transborder telephone calls
- **1968** “Earthrise” photograph (Apollo 8 in moon orbit)

The History of the “Global”

- **1971** first electronic stock exchange opens (US NASDAQ)
- **1972** first global ecological conference (UN Conference on the Human Environment)
- **1976** launch of first direct broadcast satellite
- **1977** first commercial use of fiber optic cables
- **1987** appearance of Antarctica ozone layer hole
- **1991** introduction of world wide web
- **2000** the world possessed 850 million telephone connection points, 1.1 billion television receivers, 60,000 transborder corporations, 16,500 transborder citizens organizations

Where does “global” come from?

- What is the history of the “global”?
- From the “global” to “globalization”

The “Global” and “Globalization”

- “[Globalization is] the process of increasing interconnectedness between societies such that events in one part of the world more and more have effects on peoples and societies far away.”
 - (John Baylis and Steve Smith, political scientists)
- “Globalization refers to all those processes by which the peoples of the world are incorporated into a single world society, global society.”
 - (Martin Albrow, sociologist)
- “The world is becoming a global shopping mall in which ideas and products are available everywhere at the same time.”
 - (Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Harvard Business School)

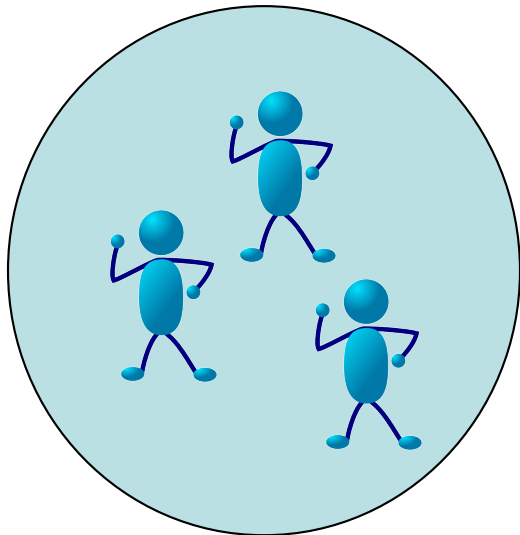
Where does “global” come from?

- What is the history of the “global”?
- From the “global” to “globalization”
- Agency and causation in a “global” world

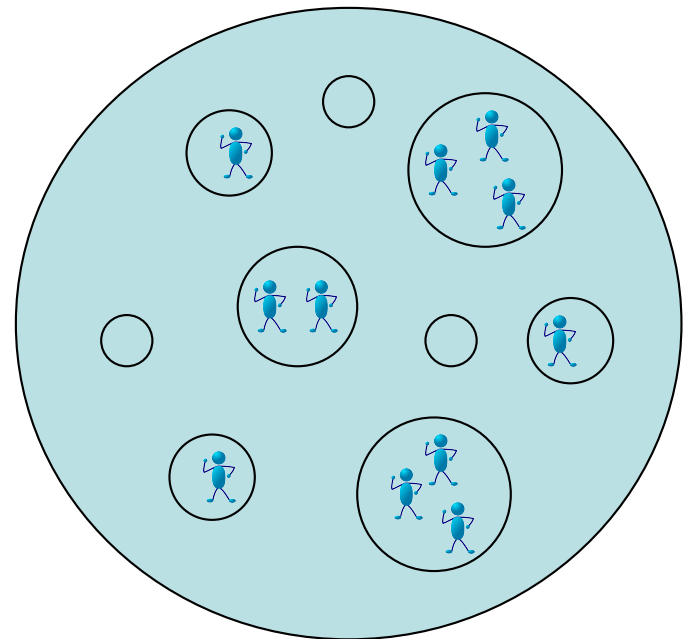
The levels of analysis: explaining agency in human affairs



1. Individual



2. State or Group



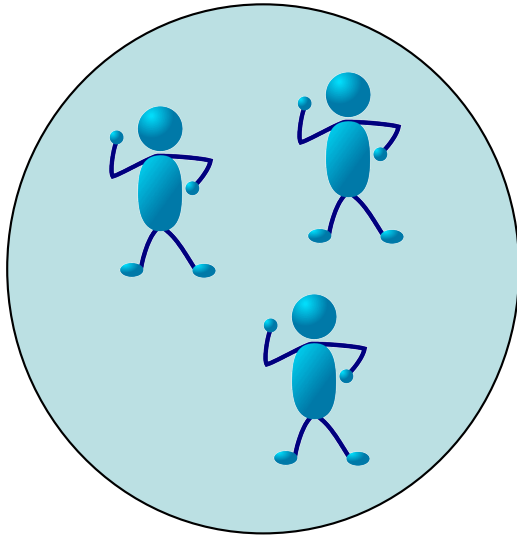
3. International System

1. The individual level of analysis



- Decision Making
- Motives
- Perception
- Cognition
- Learning
- Personality
- Ethics
- Lived Experience

2. The state/group level of analysis



- Governance
- Culture
- Belief systems
- Rules
- Identity
- Leadership
- Cohesion

CLIMATE COMPARED: PUBLIC OPINION ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE UNITED STATES & CANADA

**Key Findings Report for the
National Survey of American Public Opinion on Climate Change
and Public Policy Forum – Sustainable Prosperity Survey of
Canadian Public Opinion on Climate Change**

Release Date: February 23, 2011

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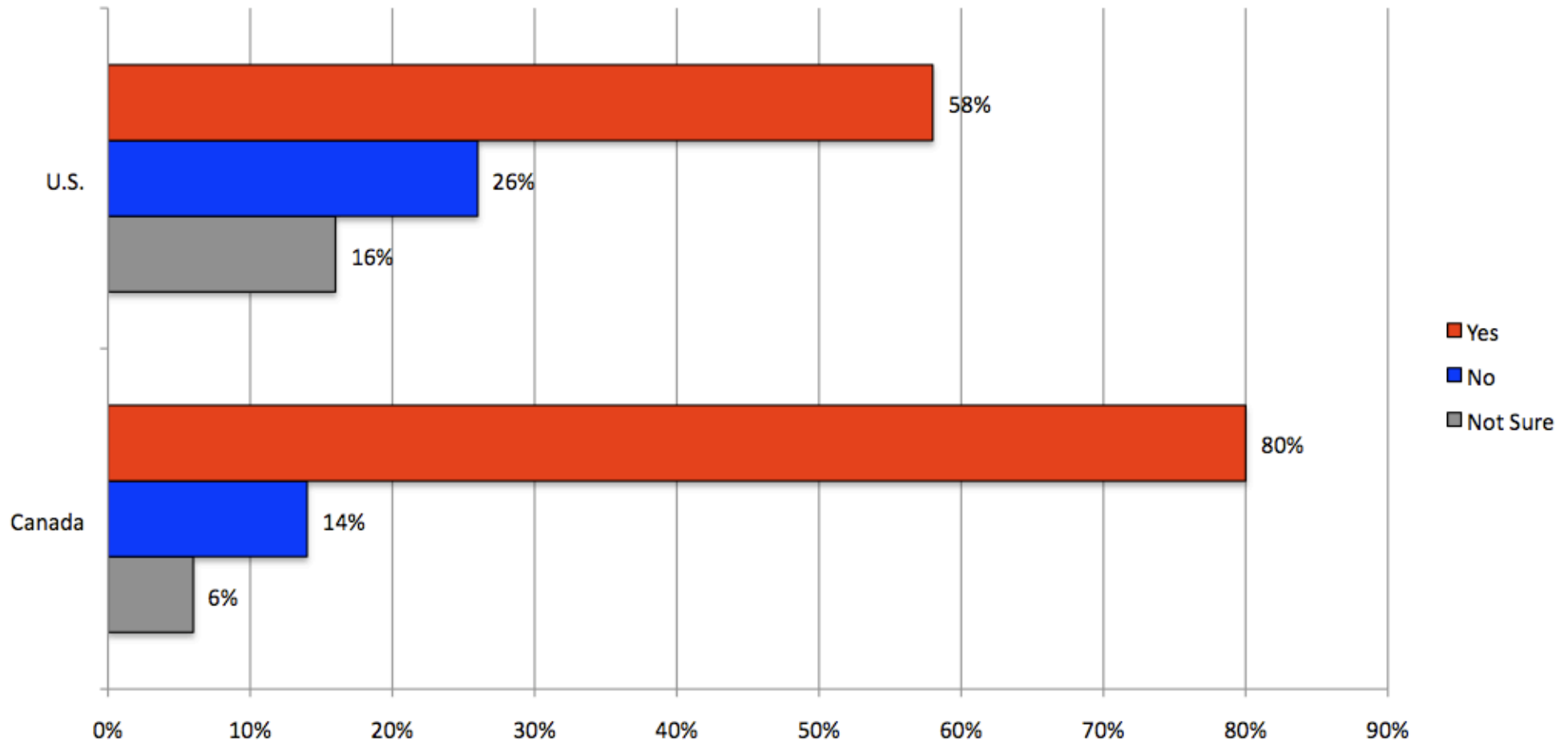
Public Policy Forum
Forum des politiques publiques



Sustainable
Prosperity

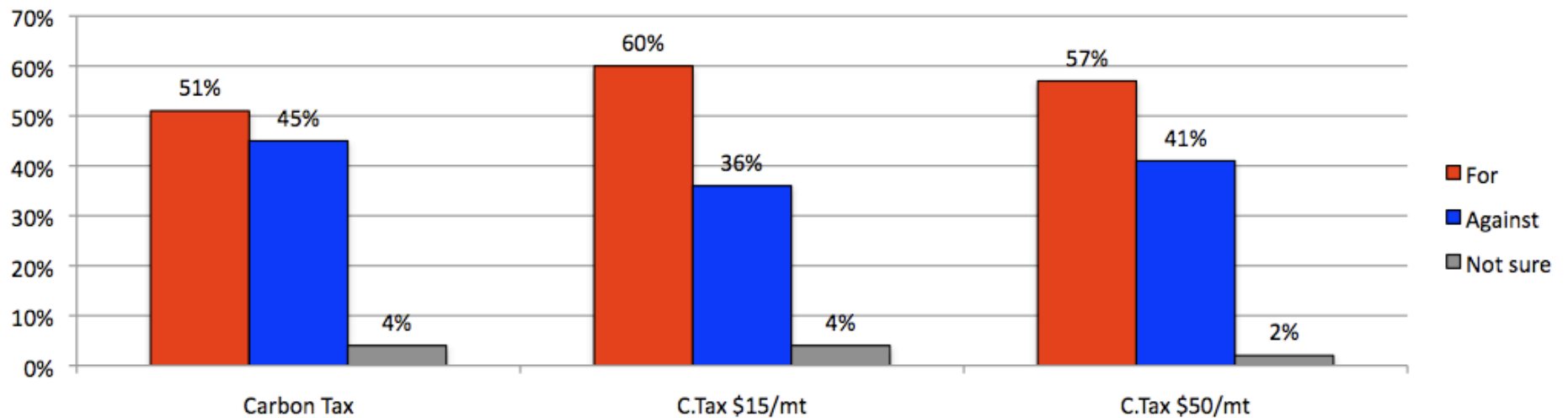
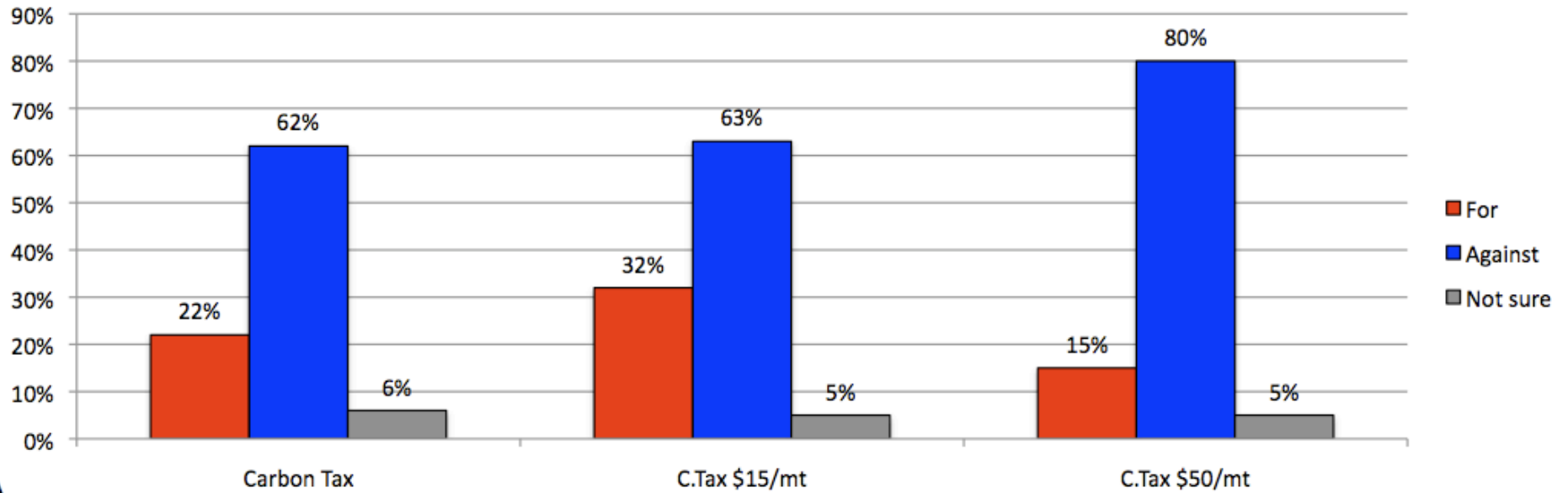
Solid evidence of warming global temperatures over last 40 years?

“From what you’ve read and heard, is there solid evidence of warming global temperatures over the last 40 years?”

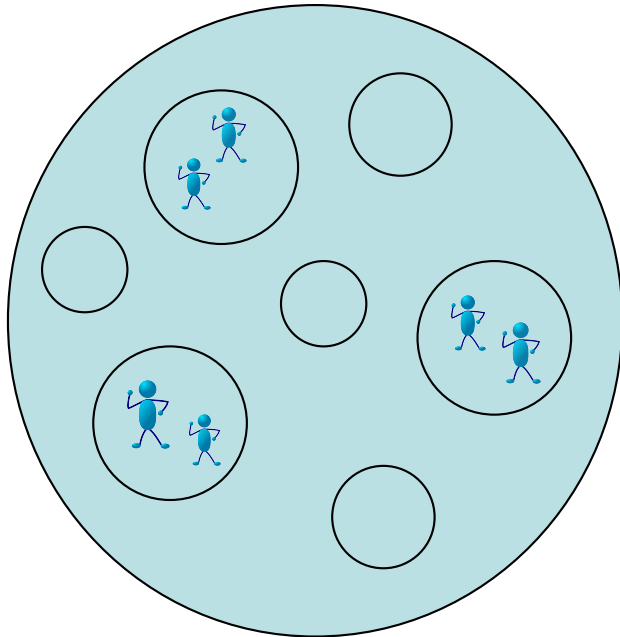


Carbon Taxation

“Another way to lower GHG emissions would be to increase taxes on carbon based fuels such as coal, oil, gasoline and natural gas. Would you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose this type of system?”

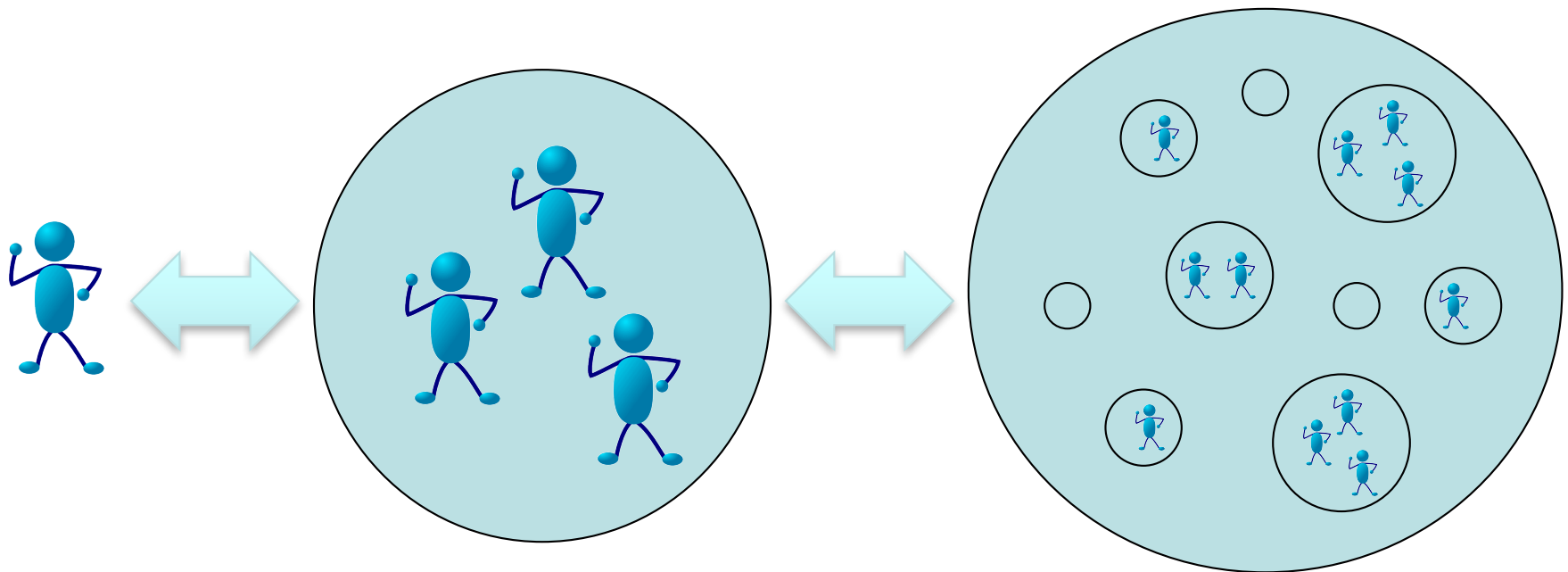


3. The system level of analysis



- Actors (states, etc.)
- Power Distribution
- Conflict
- Cooperation
- Order/Governance

The levels of analysis: explaining agency in human affairs

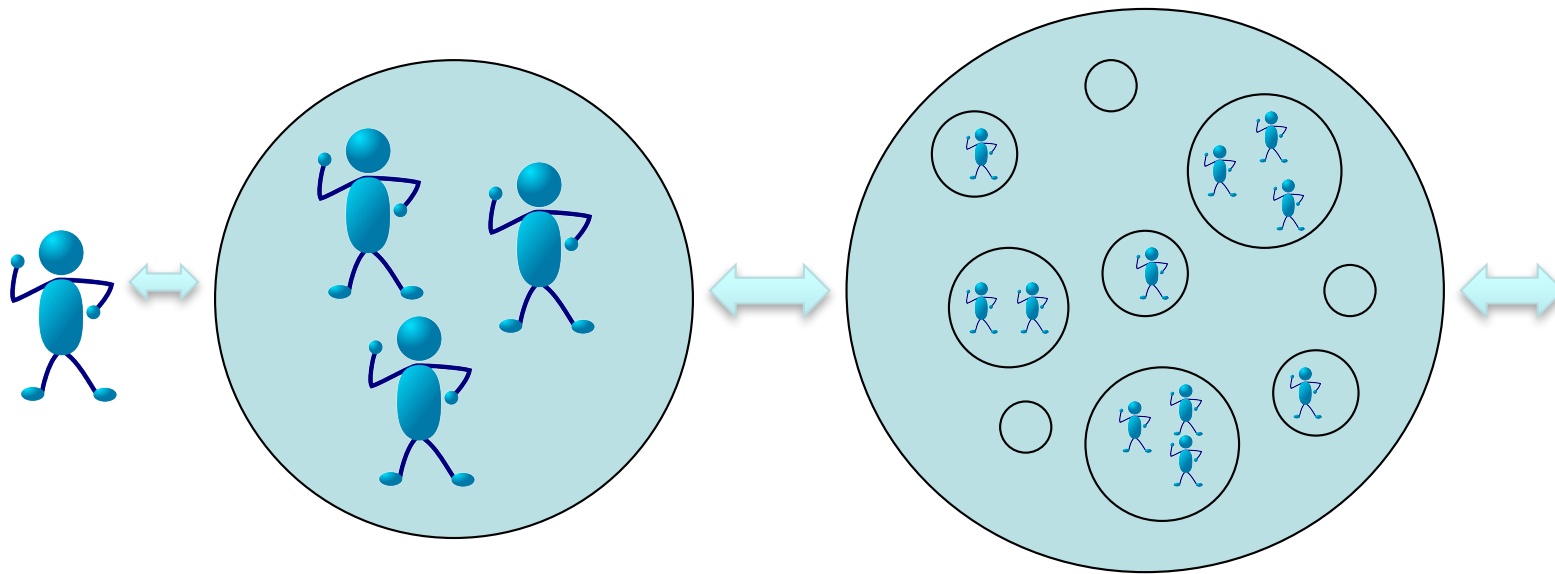


1. Individual

2. State or Group

3. International System

Adding a global level of analysis?



A global level of analysis?

- Human Society
- Non Human Life
- Eco/Bio sphere
- Genes
- Physical World
- Solar System

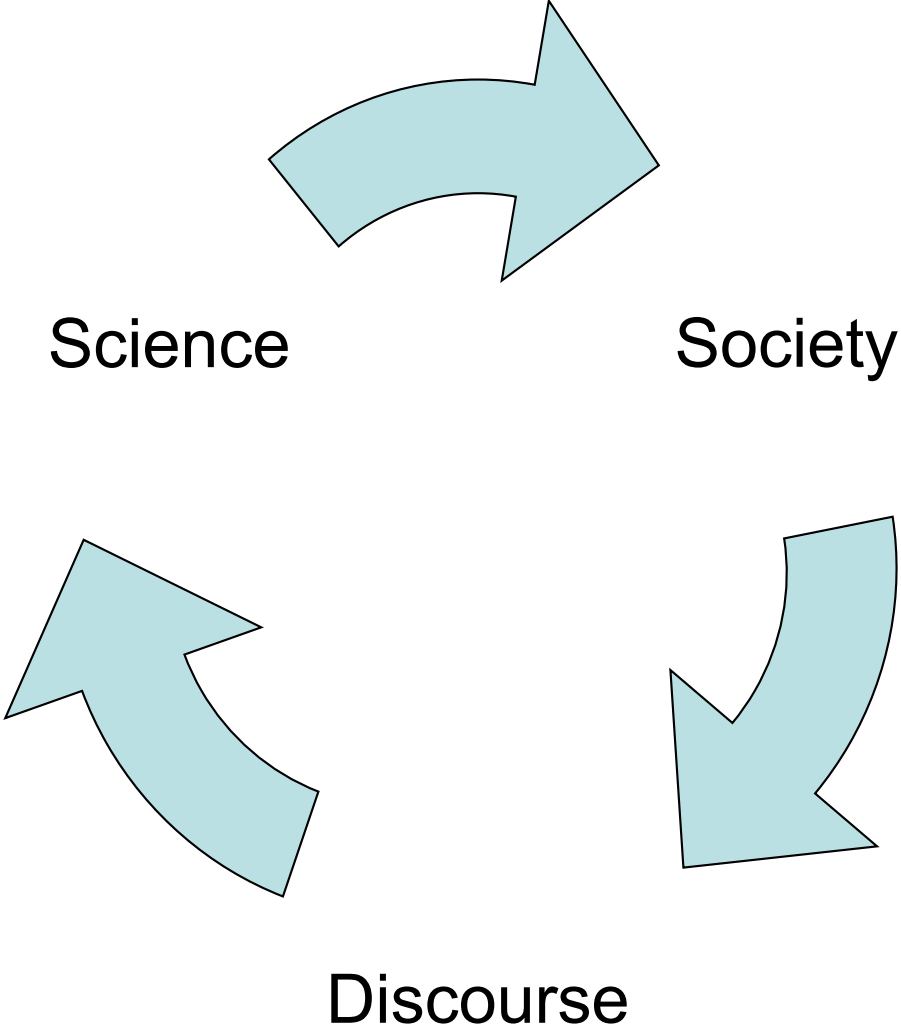
And so...

- Global phenomena can be explained in different ways
- Global events will have an impact in different ways
- Actions or events at one level will have an impact on other levels

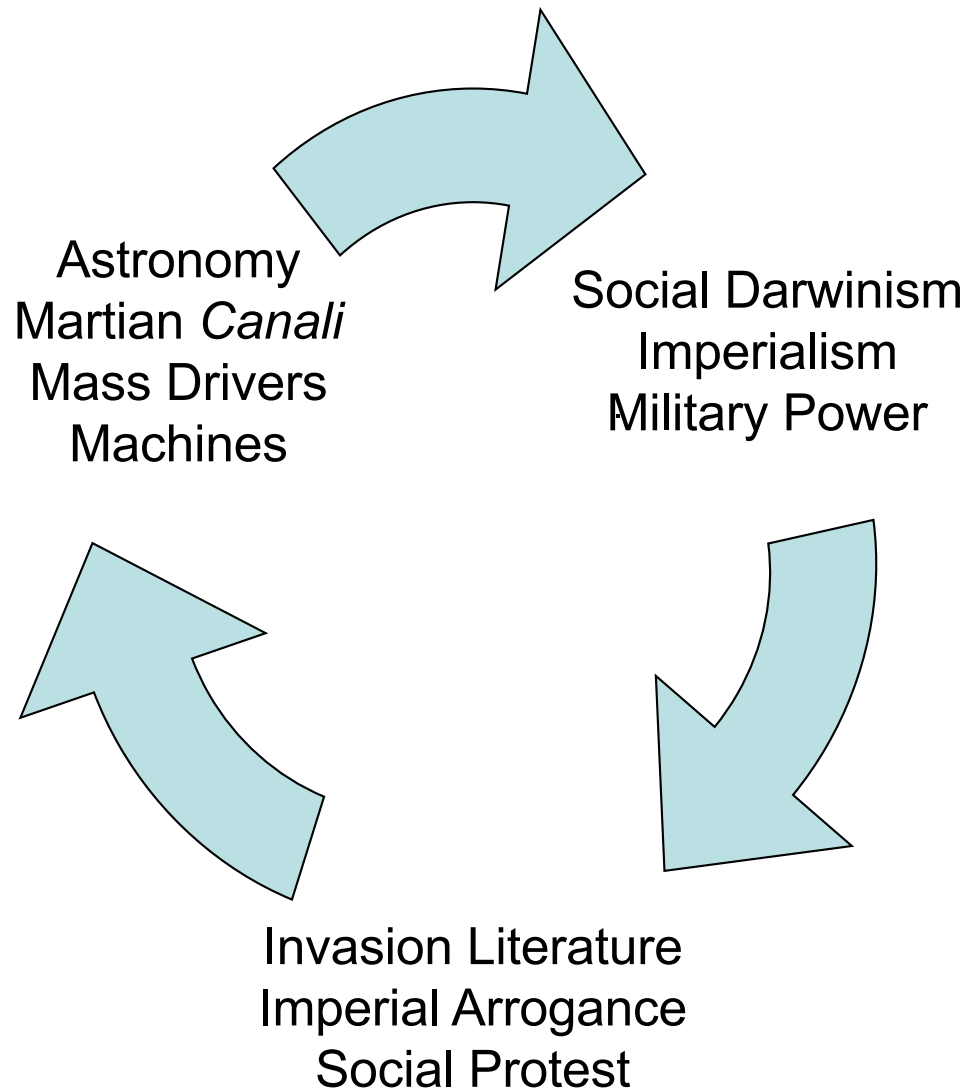
Doomsday Zeitgeist

(or The End of the World as We Know It)

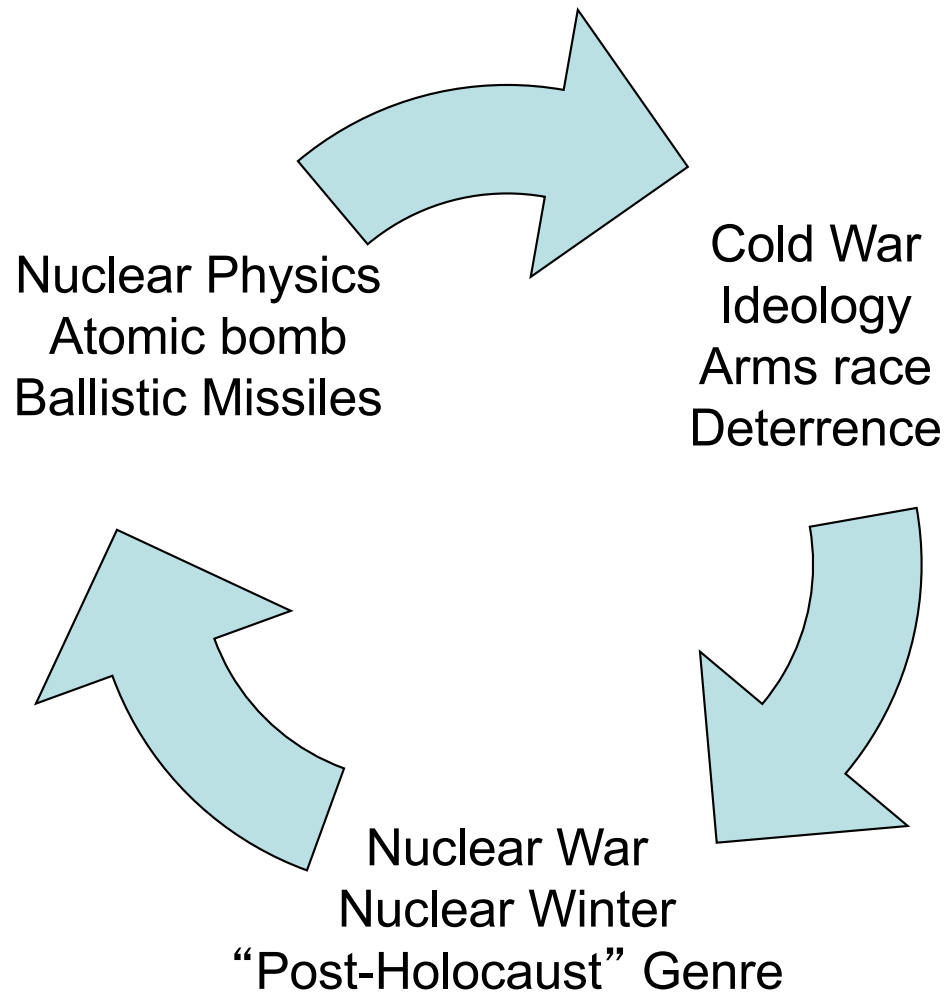
Society and Prediction: *Zeitgeist*



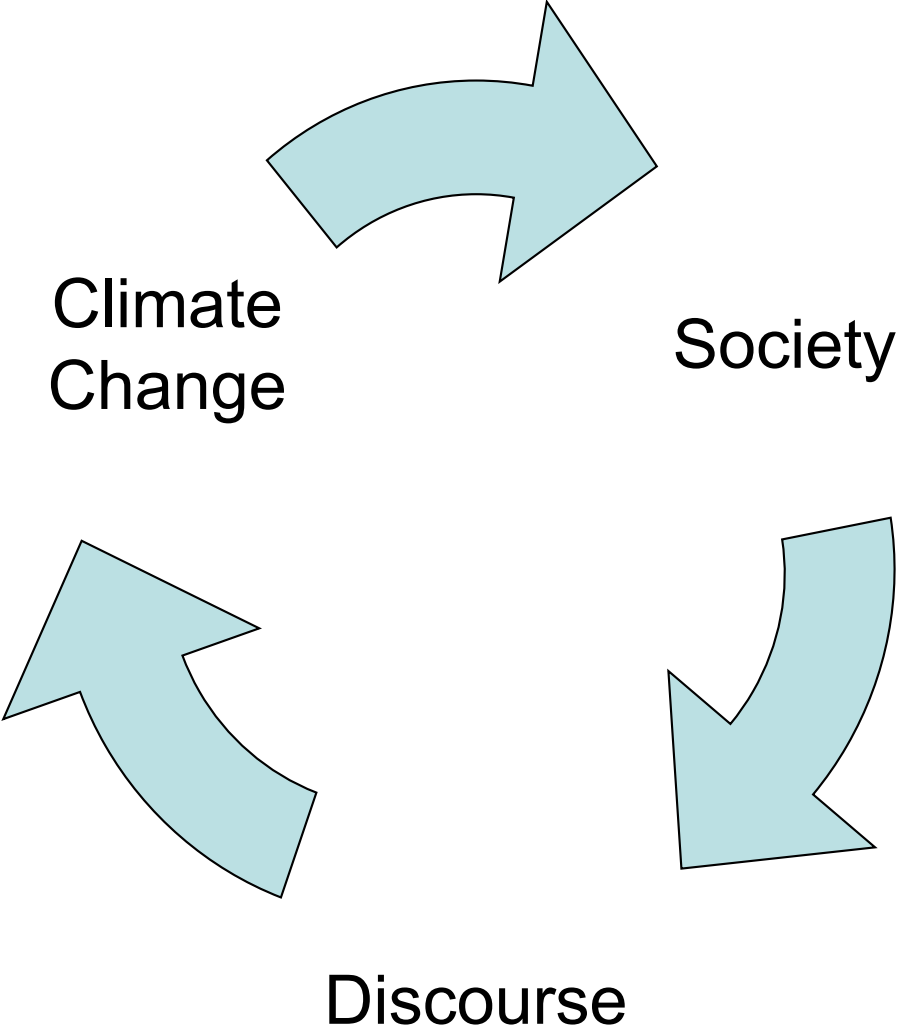
Society and Prediction: *Zeitgeist* and H.G. Well's *War of the Worlds* (1898)



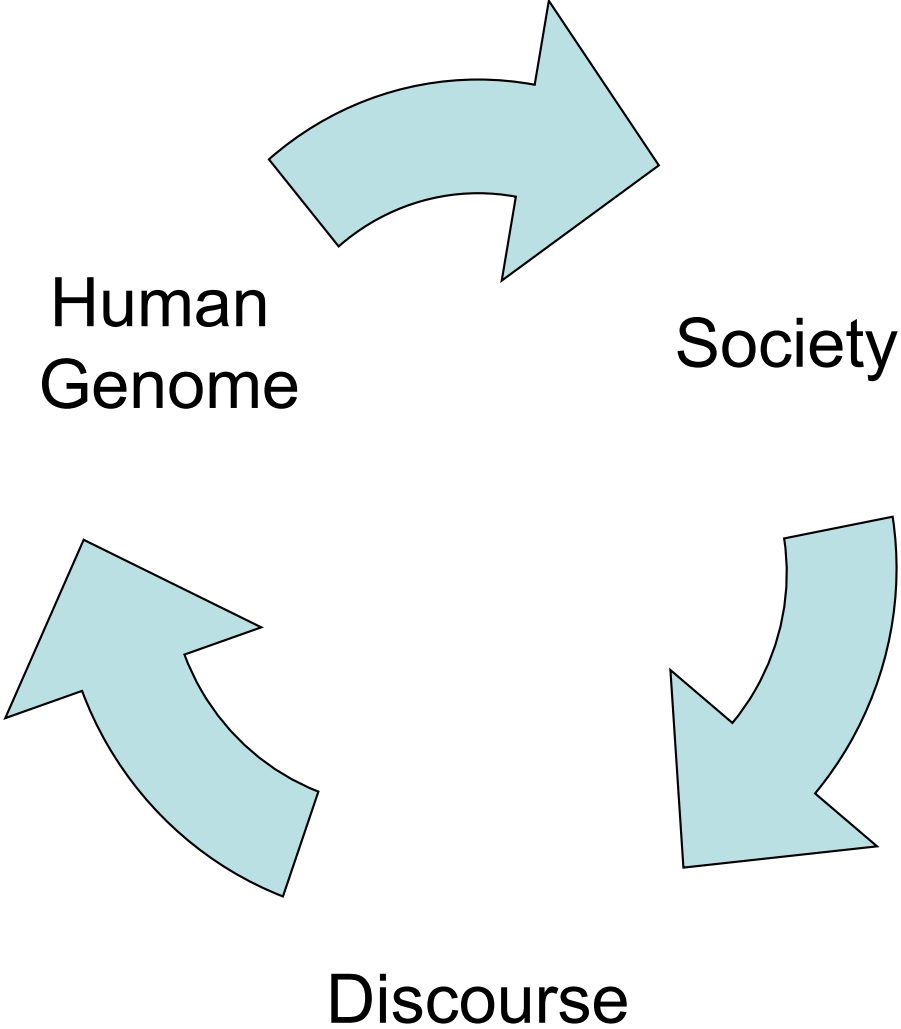
Society and Prediction: *Zeitgeist* and Nuclear War during the Cold War



Society and Prediction: *Zeitgeist*



Society and Prediction: *Zeitgeist*



Top Five Doomsday Scenarios of Our Time according to ASIC 200 (2017-2018)

Top Five Doomsday Scenarios of Our Time according to ASIC 200 (2009)

- Obesity
- Food shortage
- Climate change
- WWIII
- Nuclear War
- Disease
- Biological warfare
- Sun goes out
- Robots
- Asteroids
- Alien invasion

Top Five Doomsday Scenarios of Our Time according to ASIC 200 (2010)

- AI (robots)
- Disease
- Zombies!!
- Food shortages
- Global warming
- Peak oil
- Asteroids
- Mayan calendar (2012)
- WWIII (WMD)

Top Five Doomsday Scenarios of Our Time according to ASIC 200 (2011)

- Sarah Palin
- Religious fundamentalism
- Overpopulation
- Zombies!!
- Obesity
- Black hole experiment and CERN
- 2012 Mayan calendar
- Natural disasters
- Resource scarcity
- Climate change

Top Five Doomsday Scenarios of Our Time according to ASIC 200 (2012)

- Day after tomorrow
- Killer storms
- Climate change
- Pandemics
- Robot uprising
- Overpopulation/resource scarcity
- Rogue asteroids
- Terrorism/war on terror
- Alien invasion
- Financial collapse

Top Five Doomsday Scenarios of Our Time according to ASIC 200 (2014-2015)

Out of water

Epidemic/disease

Atomic warfare

Natural disaster/climate related

Religious conflict

Nuclear disaster (Fukushima)

Inequality

Meteor

Biological warfare

Exhaust resources

Society and Prediction: *Zeitgeist* and Doomsday Today

- Social collapse due to environmental pressures (*Collapse* by Jared Diamond)
- Infectious Disease (movies like *Outbreak*)
- Particle experiment (*Our Final Hour* by Martin Rees)
- Nano-robots (Michael Crichton thriller *Prey*)
- Rogue planets (“Planet X” or “Nibiru”) or black holes
- Shifting magnetic poles (The movie *The Core*)
- Super volcanoes: huge long term volcanic eruptions that coincide with large extinctions (*Volcano*)
- Climate Change (the movie *The Day After Tomorrow*)
- Killer Asteroids (*Deep Impact* and *Armageddon*)
- Zombies (*The Walking Dead*, *iZombie*, *Z Nation*)



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Zombie apocalypse would potentially wipe out humanity in just 100 days, students calculate — University of Leicester:
www2.le.ac.uk/news/blog/2017...

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6:24 AM - 5 Jan 2017



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@PhysicsUoL would Zombies still need concrete?



Society and Prediction: *Zeitgeist* and Doomsday Today

- “I do not think the human race will survive the next thousand years unless we spread into space.”

Stephen Hawking

Society and Prediction: *Zeitgeist* and Doomsday Today

- "Remember to look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see, wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious. However difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at. It matters that you don't just give up."

Stephen Hawking

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