

**"This is a wonderful brief guide to the uses of geography as a field of study at a time when it is all too necessary."**

John Agnew, UCLA

**"In a world of increasing specialization, it is crucial to understand the connections between spaces, places, and nature, between war, climate change, and economic inequality. This must-read book provides a riposte to all those who criticize geography as a generalist subject."**

Linda McDowell, University of Oxford

Ever since humans sketched primitive maps in the dirt, the quest to understand our surroundings has been fundamental to our survival. Studying geography revealed that the earth was round, showed our ancestors where to plant crops, and helped them appreciate the diversity of the planet.

Today, the world is changing at an unprecedented pace, as a result of rising sea levels, deforestation, species extinction, rapid urbanization, and mass migration. Modern technologies have brought people from across the globe into contact with each other, with enormous political and cultural consequences. As a subject concerned with how people, environments, and places are organized and interconnected, geography provides a critical window into where things happen, why they happen where they do, and how geographical context influences environmental processes and human affairs. These perspectives make the study of geography more relevant than ever, yet it remains little understood.

In this engrossing book, Alexander B. Murphy explains why geography is so important to the current moment.

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