

Global Speak

"In this juggernaut called globalization, the 'local' can have a voice."

—Margueritte S. Murphy and Samir Dayal, Associate Professors of English, Bentley University

Bentley Professors Margueritte Murphy and Samir Dayal recently collaborated on a collection of essays exploring the myths and realities of globalization. Here they comment on the issues raised in their book, *Global Babel: Questions of Discourse and Communication in a Time of Globalization*.

Globalization is often viewed as an economic issue. But your book argues for a broader, cultural perspective. Why? **MM:** If we are talking about globalization—and everybody is—we need to understand it from every discipline. **SD:** That's why we include essays from sociologists, artists, anthropologists, political scientists and economists. Not surprisingly, they see globalization very differently.

For example? **SD:** Some argue that globalization is universally empowering: it lifts all boats. Others point to those left behind, the victims of globalization. **MM:** Globalization is complex and double-edged. Clearly we need a dual perspective.

Isn't globalization inevitable? **MM:** One of the myths of globalization is that it is everywhere and it is unstoppable. If globalization is a runaway train, what are we losing in terms of history, culture and tradition along the way? **SD:** The alternative is to give voice to the "local," which, thanks to the Internet, can now be projected globally.

Does that mean "local" is no longer local?

MM: It does raise interesting questions about location. Is the individual simply afloat in a sea of global cultures or a member of a given nation, city or village? **SD:** Have we moved from local to global to "glocal"?

What are the lessons of *Global Babel*? **SD:** That globalization is both good and bad. That students of globalization must pay attention to other cultures and perspectives—and be sensitive to local constituencies. **MM:** There is a plethora of discourse about globalization but no common framework for communication. *Global Babel* encourages us to reframe the questions so that we may have a more meaningful, ongoing conversation about global issues.

To learn more about our faculty research, innovative programs and cutting-edge technology, please visit our website.

MORE Professors Murphy and Dayal discuss their work at Bentley.edu/research

