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It's a Small World After All

Author: By Jagdish Bhagwati

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Abstract: Thomas Friedman, a reporter who has risen to be a columnist for the New York Times, is not immune from this affliction. In "The Lexus and the Olive Tree" (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 394 pages, \$27.50), he attempts to explain a great deal. Sadly, the book's failings match its ambition. It will come as no surprise to Mr.

Friedman's readers in the Times -- where he calls the world's statesmen, the Bills and Bibis, by their first names -- that he crowds his book with puffy quotations from the mighty. Worse, we also hear from his college pals, his brother-in-law and his 79-year-old mother, who plays bridge on the Internet with three Frenchmen to the evident delight of her son. The cuteness turns into silliness when Mr. Friedman propounds the "Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention": i.e., no two countries with McDonald's (and hence with much to lose from a disruption in the prosperity brought by globalization) will ever go to war. This short-lived theory has been disproved by the war between Belgrade and NATO.

Links: [Check Columbia Libraries for fulltext](#)

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