

Joe Studwell

Best-Selling Author and Expert On Emerging Markets

Getting Demographics Straight. Ever since Malthus made the case two hundred years ago that human beings would breed themselves to destruction, the world obsessed about over-population. Yet today, most countries' populations are falling and de-population is the bigger global challenge to economic growth. Across emerging economies, some populations are contracting at surprisingly low GDP per capita levels while in other states population growth is stubbornly high. Understanding these trends is extremely important to business. Joe takes you on an enlightening demographic tour.

Asia as a Business Today. Over 30 years, Joe watched Asian nations change from frontier markets to increasingly mature ones. He talks about changes in inter-connection, consumer habits and tastes and demographics across the region. He highlights lessons about corporate planning and human resources and explains why diversity still makes Asia a tough challenge for managers.

Techno-Nationalism and the US-China Trade War. In the mid-1980s, the Reagan administration launched a successful campaign against unfair trade practices by Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. The contemporary United States is trying to do the same thing with China. However, the task is much more complicated. China is not a responsive US ally and the trade war has become a direct techno-nationalist struggle between China and the US. American businesses and consumers are more deeply enmeshed in the Chinese economy than they were in Japan, South Korea or Taiwan. Joe tours the front lines in the technology war and talks about what is more and less likely to be successful in encouraging to China to play fair.

How Chinese Firms Innovate. Many of the techniques that raise the technological capabilities of Chinese firms are the same as those used by Japanese, South Korean, and Taiwanese corporates. However, globalisation and technological change mean that some innovation trends among Chinese firms are genuinely new. Based on years of case study fieldwork with leading Chinese companies, Joe sets out what we have seen before and what is really new in the innovation capabilities of Chinese companies.

Leadership in Emerging Countries. Leadership is particularly important in emerging nations because institutions are weak. Joe talks about what was effective in Asia and what is working in Africa, including with leaders he knows personally.

ESG: Important and Not. An authority on emerging markets and a director of a UK-listed investment firm responsible for ESG, Joe talks about why a lot of ESG is hot air, why ESG is here to stay, what is measurable, what will be measurable in the future and how firms can serve their clients honestly and usefully in the ESG space. A heads-up for those who need to think clearly on this perplexing subject.

Africa The Last Business Frontier. Growth in Africa finally picked up in the past two decades while population reached 1.5 billion – three times what it was fifty years ago. Africa is the world's last economic and business frontier of real scale, forecast to be home to 4 billion people at the end of the century – the same as Asia. Joe spent much of the past five years working in Africa and writing his latest book. He tells a tale that is counter-intuitive, more positive than many media reports and important for corporate and portfolio investors.