

---

The Bishop's Certificate and Diploma in  
Theology for Ministry

---

# Situation Analysis *for Ministry and Mission*

## Handbook Four *Global Audit*

Name:



© Copyright 2011 The Anglican Diocese of Newcastle

Newcastle School of Theology for Ministry  
P.O. Box 817  
Newcastle NSW 2300  
Australia

[www.schooloftheology.net](http://www.schooloftheology.net)

[director@schooloftheology.net](mailto:director@schooloftheology.net)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright holder.

Programme Design and Development:

Michael C. Elliott BSG  
David John Battrick BSG

*Document History:*

*Version 1 February 2010*  
*Version 2 January 2011*

*Version 3 May 2011*

---

**Visit Our Website for the Latest Programme Information  
and Resources:**

**<http://www.schooloftheology.net>**

---

# Contents

Contents.....	3
Welcome to Situation Analysis .....	4
General Introduction.....	4
The Second Three Audits.....	8
The Situation Analysis Journal .....	11
A Word of Warning About the Internet.....	12
A Note about Confidentiality .....	13
Introduction to the Handbook .....	14
Session One .....	20
INTRODUCTION .....	20
Session Two.....	35
ECONOMICS.....	35
Session Three.....	36
TRADE: EXPORTS .....	36
Session Four .....	37
TRADE: IMPORTS.....	37
Session Five .....	38
LAND USE .....	38
Session Six .....	39
MIGRATION .....	39
Session Seven.....	41
HEALTH .....	41
Session Eight.....	43
CLIMATE CHANGE.....	43
Session Nine .....	45
TECHNOLOGY .....	45
Session Ten .....	47
MEDIA .....	47
Session Eleven.....	50
IDEOLOGY.....	50
Session Twelve .....	53
LIFE IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE.....	53
Further Reading on Globalisation .....	55

# Welcome to Situation Analysis

---

---

## General Introduction

---

---

The purpose of the Bishop's Certificate and Diploma in Theology for Ministry programmes is to help you to learn about and reflect upon key areas of Christian belief and practice and their relationship to contemporary mission and ministry, in order for you to further develop your God-given gifts and skills for the service of God.

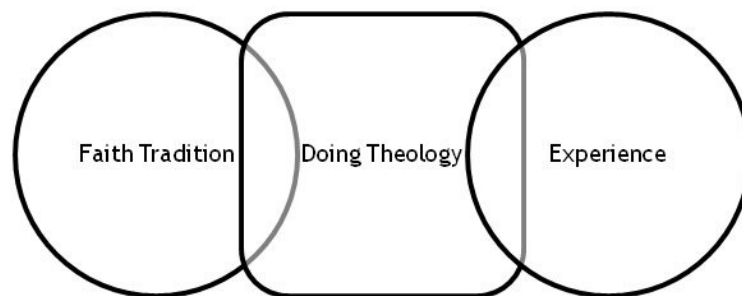
To facilitate this process we need to explore and analyse the context in which mission and ministry are located. This means that in addition to learning how to develop further the ways that we think theologically (which we hope will be nurtured by the courses in the programme) and in addition to the opportunities for us to develop our skills for ministry, we also need to develop tools of analysis to help us to understand the features and dynamics of the world in which we live.

We might like to think of this as the twin processes of deep listening and double listening.

*Deep listening* is an intentional way of being. We want to know more than just the facts and figures, or what appears to be happening on the surface. We are concerned, instead, to engage deeply in a situation, putting our own pre-conceptions to one side as we seek to find out through listening to the experiences of others the reality of the situation.

*Double listening* is the process through which we then seek to find meaning in the reality which we have uncovered. We listen on the one hand to the experiences of those around us, and on the other to the experiences of our Christian tradition.

Another way of looking at this is that we are being asked to listen carefully to the word (that is, the printed word and God's Word), and to listen attentively to the world (the experiences of our wider communities).



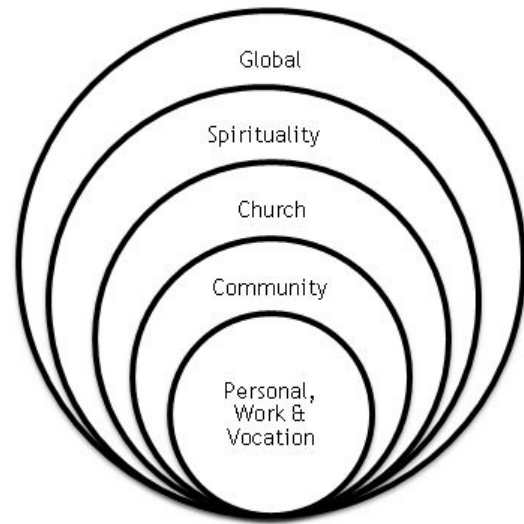
This is not a one way process of applying our theology to our situation, because our experience of the world may (as it has done throughout Christian history) inform, change and develop our theology as well.

So the challenge for us is to listen deeply to both the experiences of our wider communities, and the breadth of the Christian tradition as well, as we seek to uncover what is going on around us.

As in the Certificate programme, the focus for this intentional conversation will be the situation analysis handbooks which we will be using throughout the programme.

These handbooks invite us to look closely and carefully at a number of different areas in order to build up a database of information about ourselves and the world in which we live.

The process of Situation Analysis for Mission and Ministry is sometimes seen as a series of circles in which we begin with an exploration of ourselves and then move outwards to explore facets of the world we inhabit.



In the Certificate programme we focused our situation analysis research on the first three audits: *Personal, Work and Vocation, Community and Church.*

In the first handbook, the *Personal, Work and Vocational Audit*, of this situation analysis process, you addressed some issues relating to your own life, your work and your vocation. You undertook these exercises as a way of understanding the person you are, what makes you ‘tick’, and the ways that your family background, education and work have contributed to the development of your ‘point of view’.

In the second handbook, the *Community Audit*, we turned our attention to the community in which we live and minister in order to gather data that would aid our understanding of the dynamics which shape it and the issues which confront it, so that we could begin to engage in more relevant forms of mission.

In the third handbook, the *Church Audit*, we focused on the Church, and we attempted to create profiles of our Church as an institution, an agency and a community. Its intention was to help us explore the patterns of ministry and worship in our local congregation in order to help us to enhance both our practice of ministry, our Christian witness and our social concern.

In the Diploma programme we will be working on a further three audits: *Global, Spirituality and Reflective Practice.*

Although our situation analysis process diagram indicates that the fourth handbook should focus on spirituality and the fifth handbook should examine the ways that the global situation impacts upon what we undertake and experience locally, we have (as you have already discovered) deliberately reversed the order in which these two audits are undertaken in the programme. This was for the very practical reason that it was sensible for you to be undertaking the spirituality and belief audit as you were studying the course which introduces you to contemporary world religions, beliefs and practices.

We decided not to change the diagram because it continues to illustrate what we understand to be the normal process of situation analysis that begins within ourselves and moves outwards into increasingly broader areas and contexts.

You will notice that this is not called '*situation description*' it is '*situation analysis*'.

The difference between description and analysis is important. Whereas '*description*' implies that we become absorbed in what we describe in its own terms, '*analysis*' requires that we:

- stand back from the area of study;
- use various categories of analysis which we have consciously chosen in order to try to understand more about the area of study;
- develop precise use of the various “vocabularies” and “structures” which are distinctive to the chosen categories of analysis.

We intend to move beyond a description of what appears to be happening on the surface, to an analysis which asks why things are as they are.

We anticipate that once we have developed tools of analysis appropriate to our situations, we will continue to use them to reflect critically upon our ministries in the future. This may mean that as we look back over our

situation analysis data during the programme we will want to update it and revise it as we discover new realities and new insights.

We may be tempted to think that our situation analysis work is an optional extra in the programme: this is not the case. Our integration of this situation analysis data with the rest of our learning is of paramount importance in our journey of discovering how we may better connect with the mission which God is already engaged in around us.

Sessions will be provided at the learning weekends to help us in this task.

---

---

## The Second Three Audits

---

---

The second three audits seek to build on the research that you have already undertaken in the Certificate programme in the *Personal, Work and Vocation; Community, and Church* audits.

In this fourth handbook, the *Global Audit*, we will focus our attention on the global realities around us. At first we might think that this is not very relevant to our own situation, and is simply too large for us to come to grips with.

In this *Global Audit* we will be reminded that our town or city is not an island on its own. The current global financial situation graphically illustrates the fact that decisions made in New York, for example, can have significant effects on the lives of people working in the Hunter Valley. In the *Global Audit* we will try to uncover some of these connections.

In the fifth handbook, the *Spirituality and Belief*, we will be seeking to uncover some of the beliefs and spiritual practices held by our neighbours.

And finally, in the sixth handbook we will focus on *Becoming a Reflective Practitioner in Mission*, utilising a number of exercises to help us to examine our own developing practice of ministry.

It may well be that some of the information that we are asked to identify may raise some quite major questions about the effectiveness of ministry and mission. This will not be something to feel uncomfortable about but rather, it will be an important element in the process of our becoming a reflective practitioner, one who analyses their practice of ministry and mission in the midst of their work, in order to improve and enhance its effectiveness.

The cumulative process of situation analysis is intended to improve our skills as a critical thinker, one who is able to weigh up ideas, arguments and practices in terms of their effectiveness.

The student - not on an NSTM programme, let it be said - who when asked to comment on one's critical ability in an evaluation, responded "I am a Christian and I'm not willing to be critical of anybody or anything!", missed the point.

Being critical is not the same as being derogatory and negative: it is about forming a judgement about the effectiveness of our actions and activities.

Some of the key issues we come across in terms of mission and ministry, may cause frustration and even anger. We ought not to be afraid to confront these questions which may be related to a number of things: poverty of vision or imagination, issues of power and control, fear or resistance.

If we are critical thinkers we will ask why this or that is happening and go on posing the question 'why?' to the explanations we receive until we can identify root causes. Only when the root causes are identified can problems be satisfactorily addressed.

Our responses to the questions in these audits will combine to build up data which we hope will then be a source for further reflection on the ministry and mission opportunities available to us and our local congregations.

If you are a member of a Parish Ministry Team in a Ministering Community in Mission it would be a good idea for you to take your situation analysis findings with you to team meetings. If you are not in a Parish Ministry Team you will need to think about how this information can be integrated with the mission goals and plans of your parish in other ways.

---

---

# The Situation Analysis Journal

---

---

Throughout this programme you will be developing two kinds of learning journals:

- One learning journal will contain responses to the questions and integrative exercises from the six courses in the programme.
- The other learning journal will contain your growing database of situation analysis data, which will be made up of responses to the questions in each of the situation analysis handbooks.

We recommend that, where possible, these journals are typed on a computer so that they are clear and able to be edited before being printed and submitted.

If you are not able to type your learning journals you can choose the form in which they are prepared. Participants have learnt in the past that it is best to use ring binders rather than exercise books, so that additional information can be added as you go along.

When you are asked to submit the learning journals at the completion of a block of courses you will be expected to submit both your learning journal for the courses and a separate learning journal for your situation analysis research as well.

---

---

## A Word of Warning About the Internet

---

---

The internet is one of the most significant sources of information available to us, but we cannot take for granted that the information which it provides is accurate or relevant. Whilst we know that this warning is true for all sources of information, the fact that it is very cheap (and often free) to publish information on the internet from anywhere in the world, means that we need to be even more careful about its accuracy.

At the same time we also need to ensure that we do not fall into the trap of thinking that if we print some information from the internet our task is done. In the past some participants have presented learning journals containing reams of printing from the internet without any evidence that this has been read or applied to their local context.

Please do not attempt to submit large amounts of printed information from the internet in your situation analysis learning journals.

The internet is a wonderful source of information, if we use it critically and apply the information carefully.

---

---

## A Note about Confidentiality

---

---

Because your responses to the questions which follow are to be entered session by session into your situation analysis learning journal, which will be submitted for assessment purposes to your local group leader, you may have some issues about another person viewing some of your responses which contain personal or sensitive information - we understand this completely.

You are absolutely free to not include information or material which you regard as confidential. Should you feel that some of the information (for example about your family, or your employment) should remain confidential there are two ways of handling this.

The more complicated way is for you to devise a code for the material so that only you can interpret it, but that is very time consuming. The simplest way is, when responding to a sensitive question in your learning journal, to note "Confidential" as the formal response, but to respond to the question and keep the information in a private notebook. On seeing "Confidential" your local group leader will respect your privacy but know that you have done the work required.

You will need to join this information back up at some point so that your situation analysis learning journal will be complete when you need to refer to it at a later point.

Remember that your learning journal may be seen by your local group leader and members of the NSTM Board's Moderation Group. No one else will see your learning journal without your permission.

# Introduction to the Handbook

*Globalisation* has become a catch-word these days. It is a term used to describe the way that our world seems to have become smaller through people and nations becoming far more interconnected than they used to be.

An event on the far side of the world, which fifty years ago we might have come to know about in days or perhaps weeks, we now learn about instantly through sophisticated communication systems. It is as if we are there witnessing history being made, as on such occasions as when Nelson Mandela walked out of prison and television beamed the images into our living room as they happened, or when Princess Diana was killed in a car accident, or when the World Trade Centre was attacked by terrorists.

The way that we shop is a powerful reminder of the changes that have taken place around us. Every time we go to the supermarket we are confronted by globalisation. This is of great benefit to us because we can now purchase the fruit and vegetables that we want all year round instead of being reliant upon seasonal local produce. Globalisation makes this possible.

Our beans may come from Kenya, where a great deal of arable land is now given over to producing vegetables and flowers for the world market, in a poor country where poor people now have less and less access to land to grow food to sustain their families.

Our grapes may come from the USA which has a notorious record for exploiting migrant workers to pick them.

Our garlic may come from China, the emergent superpower, which has a woeful history of ignoring human rights.

So our beans, grapes and garlic may come at a price which is not just the money that we pay for them, but the human price of poverty, exploitation

and injustice that people in the producer countries are having to pay. That is what globalisation does for us: it makes connections between our lives and theirs, and as thinking Christians we need to be aware of both the positive and negative effects of those links.

You may remember the early exercise in situation analysis in the Certificate programme where we were asked to identify those sources of information which we regard as reliable.

Ten years ago we had to rely on people mailing us copies of printed papers and journals. Today globalisation makes it possible for us to read them online moments after they have been published, and we are open to a world of comment and analysis on every topic imaginable through the internet and other new forms of communication.

Take the newspaper that you read every day, for example, and look for issues of globalisation as you read it. Here are three examples from a newspaper as this audit was being written:

First there is a lead article on a United Nations report which concludes that top firms cause \$2.2 trillion worth of environmental damage each year, a figure greater than the national economies of all but seven countries. If these companies were forced to pay to clean up the pollution that they cause, they would lose thirty percent of their profits - so there is little incentive for them to do so. With no international body charged with policing these matters the degradation of our planet and the exploitation of its dwindling natural resources continue unabated.

Secondly, an official of Hamas, the Palestinian organisation, was assassinated in Dubai, by a team of agents using stolen British passports of innocent living people. Early indications are that the killing is the work of Mossad, the Israeli secret police with the possible involvement of other governments. It is globalisation with its provision of rapid transport connections around the world, and sophisticated technologies to reproduce passports and to conceal weapons that makes the growth of both terrorism and counter-terrorism a risk

for all of us. Globalisation has helped make our world a less safe environment for us.

The third headline concerns the wine industry. There has been a major court case in France involving the biggest United States wine growers, E&J Gallo, who have over the last few years bought 13.5 million litres of pinot noir from French producers. But this transaction turned out to be an enormous scam with the wine purchased actually being inferior wine made from an over supply in France of cheaper merlot and shiraz grapes.

This American surge in demand for red grapes came as a much needed opportunity for French growers because their production was being badly hit by competition from other countries. What countries, you may ask? Australia and New Zealand of course. So in this instance the export of our products, created a crisis for French growers, who resorted to fraudulent practices in respect to an American customer. Globalisation facilitated this.

What examples are in your newspaper today of the effects of globalisation at work, for good and for bad, in our world?

In his book *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (Anchor Books, New York, 2000), Thomas Friedman describes globalisation in this way

Globalisation is not simply a trend or a fad but is, rather, an international system. It is the system that has now replaced the old Cold War system, and like that Cold War system, globalisation has its own rules and logic that today directly or indirectly influence the politics, environment, geopolitics and economics of virtually every country in the world. (2000:ix)

If you are gaining the impression that globalisation has a lot to do with economics, you would be right. The noted economist Joseph Stiglitz in his book *Globalisation and its Discontents* (Penguin Books, London, 2004) identifies some of the arguments advanced in favour of globalisation.

Through opening up new markets globalisation has helped many countries

develop more rapidly than they might have otherwise done. It has enriched many Asian nations making people there far better off, reducing poverty and raising standards of living. Largely through the communications revolution, and particularly the internet, it has reduced the sense of isolation in the developing world, given those countries access to knowledge which was not previously possible, and through instruments like foreign aid and World Bank projects brought employment and other benefits to millions.

Stiglitz also highlights some of the negative effects of globalisation. Despite the arguments that globalisation creates economic benefits which reduce poverty, in the last decade of the twentieth century those living in poverty increased by 100 million people.

In Africa in many cases standards of living are declining, something noted by many visitors to that continent. One of the problems is that western countries, largely through the agency of the World Trade Organisation, have pressed developing countries to eliminate trade barriers, while insisting on maintaining their own. The result, Stiglitz argues, is that the West ‘garners a disproportionate share of the benefits at the expense of the developing world’.

The sociologist Anthony Giddens writing in *Runaway World: How Globalisation is Reshaping our Lives* (Profile Books, 2002) alerts us to aspects of “the dark side” of globalisation:

Before the current global era it was impossible to imagine that comparable events could have occurred, reflecting as they do our new found interdependence. The rise of global terrorism, like the world wide networks involved in money-laundering, drug-running and other forms of organised crime, are all parts of the dark side of globalisation. [Giddens, 2002:xvi]

This may well be so, but why should we work on a *Global Audit* as part of our situation analysis in this programme? What has all of this to do with our Christian mission and ministry?

In our situation analysis we began mapping the context in which our life and work is set, by looking first at ourselves in some rather introspective exercises designed to help us understand why we have adopted certain vantage points and why we interpret our experience in the way we do.

Then we began looking outwards at our work, our community and our Church, identifying the many structures and influences that we see at work in them. Now this *Global Audit* will help us complete the picture by alerting us to the way that what happens globally very often determines what life is like for us locally.

Appreciating the fuller picture which our analysis creates for us, we are better placed for embarking upon effective mission and ministry.

One slogan that you may have encountered is *Think Globally: Act Locally*. This suggests that although the world's problems may frequently appear too immense for us to make any appreciable impact upon them, because of the very direct links between the global and the local, it is possible for us to make significant interventions through our work and witness where we are.

The French sociologist Jacques Ellul, a Christian convert from Marxism, insists that Christian mission *is* to think globally and act locally. Thinking globally, he says, often means that we have to let go of the security of our own group's viewpoint, and acting locally is our responsibility to be present and active in all those parts of society that are suffering in any way at this present time.

“Reading the signs of the times” (thinking globally) and “making an option for the poor” (acting locally) are biblical hallmarks of Christian witness. Indeed, they are signs that we can detect in the life of Jesus himself.

The *Global Audit* which follows is divided into twelve sessions. The first session provides a general introduction to aspects of thinking globally. This is followed by ten sessions looking at particular aspects of the global. In the final session you are invited to write two reflective summaries.

Of course this list is not exhaustive and you will probably think of a number of key areas which are missing from the exercise through lack of space. The audit concludes with your reflection on the implications of what you have discovered for ministry and mission.

The audit, rather than asking you to collect a wealth of data about a global issue, which can often be very difficult to interpret, instead invites you to begin where we you are with a small piece of research or an enquiry which will open up some dimensions of the global. As with other parts of our situation analysis, this audit can be undertaken as a group exercise if you wish.

# Session One

---

---

## INTRODUCTION

---

---

Please make sure that you have read the introduction to this audit before commencing this first session.

As a general introduction to global issues we are inviting you this session to watch a brief video about a major facet of globalisation, consumerism, which you can view via the internet. We hope that you will be able to manage to see this via your own desktop or laptop computer, or make arrangements to view the video through a friend or colleague. If you cannot get access to the video, you will find the script and a fact sheet reproduced below. The video is called *The Story of Stuff* and you can access it at: [www.storyofstuff.com](http://www.storyofstuff.com)

A word of caution however. The video is made for an American audience, so the data that it uses relates primarily to their situation. On balance the situation is similar for most developed countries although the statistics may vary a little. So as you watch, you need to be mentally locating the themes - extraction, production, distribution, consumption, and disposal - in our Australian context. Even in the absence of the comparative statistics for Australia, with a little reflection the connections will be fairly obvious to you. It may help you to consult the Fact Sheet and the script which accompanies the video which we have provided in this audit.

After you have viewed the video note in your situation analysis learning journal the most significant things that you have learnt about globalisation from Annie Leonard's presentation, and also those things that you have heard that you do not necessarily agree with.

## Facts from The Story of Stuff

- In the past three decades, one-third of the planet's natural resources base have been consumed.<sup>1</sup>
- In the United States, we have less than 4% of our original forests left.<sup>2</sup>
- Forty percent of waterways in the US have become undrinkable.<sup>3</sup>
- The U.S. has 5% of the world's population but consumes 30% of the world's resources<sup>4</sup> and creates 30% of the world's waste.<sup>5</sup>
- If everybody consumed at U.S. rates, we would need 3 to 5 planets.
- There are over 100,000 synthetic chemicals in commerce today.<sup>6</sup>
- Only a handful of synthetic chemicals have even been tested for human health impacts and NONE have been tested for synergistic health impacts.<sup>7</sup>
- In the U.S., industry admits to releasing over 4 billion pounds of toxic chemicals a year.<sup>8</sup>
- The average U.S. person now consumes twice as much as they did 50 years ago.<sup>9</sup>
- We each see more advertisements in one year than a people 50 years ago saw in a lifetime.<sup>10</sup>
- In the U.S. our national happiness peaked sometime in the 1950s.<sup>11</sup>
- In the U.S., we spend 3–4 times as many hours shopping as our counterparts in Europe do.<sup>12</sup>
- Average U.S. house size has doubled since the 1970s.<sup>13</sup>
- Each person in the United States makes 4 1/2 pounds of garbage a day.<sup>14</sup> That is twice what we each made thirty years ago.<sup>15</sup>

- For every one garbage can of waste you put out on the curb, 70 garbage cans of waste were made upstream to make the junk in that one garbage can you put out on the curb.<sup>16</sup>

1 Paul Hawken, Amory Lovins and L. Hunter Lovins, *Natural Capitalism*, Little Brown and Company, (1999). Excerpted from page 4: "In the past three decades, one-third of the planet's resources, its 'natural wealth,' has been consumed."

2 Lester Brown, Michael Renner, Christopher Flavin, *Vital Signs 1998*, Worldwatch Institute, Washington, D.C. "Ninety five to ninety eight percent of forests in the continental United States have been logged at least once since settlement by Europeans." Also, see: "Can't See the Forest," by Josh Sevin, in *GRIST*, 1 March 2000. "1 to 2 percent of original forests in the U.S. remain undisturbed."

3 American Rivers, *Americas Most Endangered Rivers of 1998 Report*, Excerpt: "Today, 40 percent of our nation's rivers are unfishable, unswimmable, or undrinkable" Available at: [http://www.americanrivers.org/site/PageServer?pagename=AMR\\_content\\_e2a7](http://www.americanrivers.org/site/PageServer?pagename=AMR_content_e2a7)

4 This figure is cited in many places. For example: John L Seitz: *Global Issues: An Introduction*, (2001).

5 "The U.S. produced approximately 33% of the world's waste with 4.6% of the world's population" (Miller 1998) quoted in *Global Environmental Issues* by Frances Harris (2004).

6 Many references, including: [Ourstolenfuture.org](http://Ourstolenfuture.org); Worldwatch Institute, *State of the World 2006*; Nancy Evans (ed.), *Breast Cancer Fund, State of the Evidence 2006 Executive Summary*, available at <http://www.breastcancerfund.org/site/pp.asp?c=kwKXLdPaE&b=1370047>; Gay Daly, "Bad Chemistry" (NRDC) at <http://www.nrdc.org/onearth/06win/chem1.asp>;

7 "Of the more than 80,000 chemicals in commerce, only a small percentage of them have ever been screened for even one potential health effect, such as cancer, reproductive toxicity, developmental toxicity, or impacts on the immune system. Among the approximately 15,000 tested, few have been studied enough to correctly estimate potential risks from exposure. Even when testing is done, each chemical is tested individually rather than in the combinations that one is exposed to in the real world. In reality, no one is ever exposed to a single chemical, but to a chemical soup, the ingredients of which may interact to cause unpredictable health effects." From *Coming Clean Campaign's Body Burden* information, retrieved 11/8/07 from <http://www.chemicalbodyburden.org/>

8 "For Reporting Year 2005, 23,461 facilities reported to EPA's TRI Program. These facilities reported 4.34 billion pounds of on-site and off-site disposal or other releases of the almost 650 toxic chemicals." From: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Toxics Release Inventory*, <http://www.epa.gov/tri/>

9 "Why Consumption Matters" by Betsy Taylor and Dave Tilford, in *The Consumer Society Reader* Edited by Juliet B Schor and Douglas Holt (2000), p. 467.

10 "Each of us sees more ads alone in one year than people of 50 years ago saw in an entire lifetime." Cited in *DMNews* magazine, 12/22/97. Another measurement of the increasing volume of ads comes from David Shenk, who estimates that the average American saw 560 daily advertising messages in 1971 and by 1997 that number had increased to over 3,000 per day, in *Data Smog: Surviving the Information Glut* by David Shenk (1997).

11 Bill McKibben, *Deep Economy* (2007), p.35-36 and Vicky Robin, "Towards a Solution to Overconsumption" undated.

12 Gary Cross, *Time and Money* (1993), p. 192.

13 “Small is Beautiful: U.S. House Size, Resource Use, and the Environment” Journal of Industrial Ecology on Greener Buildings’ Greenbiz. Extracted on 11/11/07 from:  
[http://www.greenerbuildings.com/news\\_detail.cfm?NewsID=28392](http://www.greenerbuildings.com/news_detail.cfm?NewsID=28392)

14 “In 2005, U.S. residents, businesses, and institutions produced more than 245 million tons of MSW, which is approximately 4.5 pounds of waste per person per day.” Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2007.

15 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, Municipal Waste in the United States: 2001 Facts and Figures (2003), pp.3 -4.

16 The Next Efficiency Revolution: Creating a Sustainable Materials Economy by John Young and Aaron Sachs, Worldwatch Institute (1994), p. 13.

### **Script of Video Story of Stuff with Annie Leonard**

Do you have one of these? (shows MP3 player). I got a little obsessed with mine, in fact I got a little obsessed with all my stuff. Have you ever wondered where all the stuff we buy comes from and where it goes when we throw it out? I couldn't stop wondering about that. So I looked it up. And what the text books said is that our stuff simply moves along these stages: extraction to production to distribution to consumption to disposal. All together, it's called the materials economy.

Well, I looked into it a little bit more. In fact, I spent 10 years travelling the world tracking where our stuff comes from and where it goes. And you know what I found out? That is not the whole story. There's a lot missing from this explanation.

For one thing, this system looks like it's fine. No problem. But the truth is it's a system in crisis. And the reason it is in crisis is that it is a linear system and we live on a finite planet and you cannot run a linear system on a finite planet indefinitely.

Every step along the way, this system is interacting with the real world. In real life it's not happening on a blank white page. It's interacting with societies, cultures, economies, the environment. And all along the way, it's bumping up against limits. Limits we don't see here because the diagram is incomplete. So let's go back through, let's fill in some of the blanks and see what's missing.

Well, one of the most important things that is missing is people. Yes, people. People live and work all along this system. And some people in this system matter a little more than others; some have a little more say. Who are they?

Well, let's start with the government. Now my friends tell me I should use a tank to symbolise the government and that's true in many countries and increasingly in our own, after all more than 50% of our federal tax money is now going to the military, but I'm using a person to symbolise the government because I hold true to the vision and values that governments should be of the people, by the people, for the people.

It's the government's job is to watch out for us, to take care of us. That's their job.

Then along came the corporation. Now, the reason the corporation looks bigger than the government is that the corporation is bigger than the government. Of the 100 largest economies on earth now, 51 are corporations. As the corporations have grown in size and power, we've seen a little change in the government where they're a little more concerned in making sure everything is working out for those guys than for us.

OK, so let's see what else is missing from this picture.

### **Extraction**

We'll start with extraction which is a fancy word for natural resource exploitation which is a fancy word for trashing the planet. What this looks like is we chop down trees, we blow up mountains to get the metals inside, we use up all the water and we wipe out the animals.

So here we are running up against our first limit. We're running out of resources.

We are using too much stuff. Now I know this can be hard to hear, but it's the truth and we've got to deal with it. In the past three decades alone, one-third of the planet's natural resources base have been consumed. Gone.

We are cutting and mining and hauling and trashing the place so fast that we're undermining the planet's very ability for people to live here.

Where I live, in the United States, we have less than 4% of our original forests left. Forty percent of waterways have become undrinkable. And our problem is not just that we're using too much stuff, but we're using more than our share.

We [The U.S.] has 5% of the world's population but we're consuming 30% of the world's resources and creating 30% of the world's waste.

If everybody consumed at U.S. rates, we would need 3 to 5 planets. And you know what? We've only got one.

So, my country's response to this limitation is simply to go take someone else's! This is the Third World, which - some would say - is another word for our stuff that somehow got on someone else's land. So what does that look like?

The same thing: trashing the place.

- 75% of global fisheries now are fished at or beyond capacity.
- 80% of the planet's original forests are gone.
- In the Amazon alone, we're losing 2000 trees a minute. That is seven football fields a minute.

And what about the people who live here? Well. According to these guys, they don't own these resources even if they've been living there for generations, they don't own the means of production and they're not buying a lot of stuff. And in this system, if you don't own or buy a lot of stuff, you don't have value.

## **Production**

So, next, the materials move to "production" and what happens there is we use energy to mix toxic chemicals in with the natural resources to make toxic contaminated products.

There are over 100,000 synthetic chemicals in commerce today. Only a handful of these have even been tested for human health impacts and NONE of them have been tested

for synergistic health impacts, that means when they interact with all the other chemicals we're exposed to every day.

So, we don't know the full impact of these toxics on our health and environment of all these toxic chemicals. But we do know one thing: Toxics in, Toxics Out. As long as we keep putting toxics into our production system, we are going to keep getting toxics in the stuff that we bring into our homes, our workplaces, and schools. And, duh, our bodies.

Like BFRs, brominated flame retardants. They are a chemical that make things more fireproof but they are super toxic. They're a neurotoxin - that means toxic to the brain. What are we even doing using a chemical like this?

Yet we put them in our computers, our appliances, couches, mattresses, even some pillows. In fact, we take our pillows, we douse them in a neurotoxin and then we bring them home and put our heads on them for 8 hours a night to sleep. Now, I don't know, but it seems to me that in this country with so much potential, we could think of a better way to stop our heads from catching on fire at night.

These toxics build up in the food chain and concentrate in our bodies.

Do you know what is the food at the top of the food chain with the highest levels of many toxic contaminants? Human breast milk.

That means that we have reached a point where the smallest members of our societies - our babies - are getting their highest lifetime dose of toxic chemicals from breastfeeding from their mothers. Is that not an incredible violation? Breastfeeding must be the most fundamental human act of nurturing; it should be sacred and safe. Now breastfeeding is still best and mothers should definitely keep breastfeeding, but we should protect it. They [government] should protect it. I thought they were looking out for us.

And of course, the people who bear the biggest brunt of these toxic chemicals are the factory workers many of whom are women of reproductive age. They're working with reproductive toxics, carcinogens and more. Now, I ask you, what kind of woman of reproductive age would work in a job exposed to reproductive toxics, except one who had no other option?

And that is one of the “beauties” of this system. The erosion of local environments and economies here ensures a constant supply of people with no other option. Globally 200,000 people a day are moving from environments that have sustained them for generations, into cities many to live in slums, looking for work, no matter how toxic that work may be. So, you see, it is not just resources that are wasted along this system, but people too. Whole communities get wasted.

Yup, toxics in, toxics out. A lot of the toxics leave the factory as products, but even more leave as byproducts, or pollution. And it’s a lot of pollution. In the U.S., industry admits to releasing over 4 billion pounds of toxic chemicals a year and it’s probably way more since that is only what they admit.

So that’s another limit, because, yuck, who wants to look at and smell 4 billion pounds of toxic chemicals a year?

So, what do they do? Move the dirty factories overseas. Pollute someone else’s land!

But surprise, a lot of that air pollution is coming right back at us, carried by wind currents.

### **Distribution**

So, what happens after all these resources are turned into products? Well, it moves here, for distribution. Now distribution means “selling all this toxic contaminated junk as quickly as possible.” The goal here is to keep the prices down, keep the people buying and keep the inventory moving.

How do they keep the prices down? Well, they don’t pay the store workers very much and skimp on health insurance every time they can. It’s all about externalising the costs. What that means is the real costs of making stuff aren’t captured in the price. In other words, we aren’t really paying for the stuff we buy.

I was thinking about this the other day. I was walking to work and I wanted to listen to the news so I popped into this Radio Shack to buy a radio. I found this cute little green radio for 4 dollars and 99 cents. I was standing there in line to buy this radio and I wondering how \$4.99 could possibly capture the costs of making this radio and getting

it to my hands. The metal was probably mined in South Africa, the petroleum was probably drilled in Iraq, the plastics were probably produced in China, and maybe the whole thing was assembled by some 15 year old in a maquiladora (a factory which imports materials or components on a duty-free basis, and exports the finished product back to the originating country) in Mexico. \$4.99 wouldn't even pay the rent for the shelf space it occupied until I came along, let alone part of the staff guy's salary that helped me pick it out, or the multiple ocean cruises and truck rides pieces of this radio went on. That's how I realised, I didn't pay for the radio.

So, who did pay?

Well. these people paid with the loss of their natural resource base. These people paid with the loss of their clean air, with increasing asthma and cancer rates. Kids in the Congo paid with their future - 30% of the kids in parts of the Congo now have had to drop out of school to mine coltan, a metal we need for our disposable electronics. These people even paid, by having to cover their own health insurance. All along this system, people pitched in so I could get this radio for \$4.99. And none of these contributions are recorded in any accounts book. That is what I mean by the company owners externalise the true costs of production.

## **Consumption**

And that brings us to the golden arrow of consumption.

This is the heart of the system, the engine that drives it. It is so important [to propping up this whole flawed system] that protecting this arrow is a top priority for both these guys.

That is why, after 9/11, when our country was in shock, President Bush could have suggested any number of appropriate things: to grieve, to pray, to hope. NO. He said to shop. TO SHOP?!

We have become a nation of consumers. Our primary identity has become that of consumer, not mothers, teachers, farmers, but consumers. The primary way that our value is measured and demonstrated is by how much we contribute to this arrow, how much we consume. And do we!

We shop and shop and shop. Keep the materials flowing.

And flow they do!

Guess what percentage of total material flow through this system is still in product or use 6 months after their sale in North America. Fifty percent? Twenty? NO. One percent. One! In other words, 99 percent of the stuff we harvest, mine, process, transport - 99 percent of the stuff we run through this system is trashed within 6 months. Now how can we run a planet with that rate of materials throughput?

It wasn't always like this. The average U.S. person now consumes twice as much as they did 50 years ago. Ask your grandma. In her day, stewardship and resourcefulness and thrift were valued. So, how did this happen?

Well, it didn't just happen. It was designed.

Shortly after the World War 2, these guys were figuring out how to ramp up the [U.S.] economy. Retailing analyst Victor Lebow articulated the solution that has become the norm for the whole system. He said: "Our enormously productive economy... demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfaction, our ego satisfaction, in consumption... we need things consumed, burned up, replaced and discarded at an ever-accelerating rate."

And President Eisenhower's Council of Economic Advisors Chairman said that "The American economy's ultimate purpose is to produce more consumer goods."

MORE CONSUMER GOODS??? Our [economy's] ultimate purpose?

Not provide health care, or education, or safe transportation, or sustainability or justice?  
Consumer goods?

How did they get us to jump on board this program so enthusiastically?

Well, two of their most effective strategies are planned obsolescence and perceived obsolescence.

Planned obsolescence is another word for “designed for the dump.” It means they actually make stuff that is designed to be useless as quickly as possible so we will chuck it and go buy a new one. It’s obvious with stuff like plastic bags and coffee cups, but now it’s even big stuff: mops, DVDs, cameras, barbeques even, everything!

Even computers. Have you noticed that when you buy a computer now, the technology is changing so fast that within a couple years, it’s [your new computer] actually an impediment to communication. I was curious about this so I opened up a big desk top computer to see what was inside. And I found out that the piece that changes each year is just a tiny little piece in the corner. But you can’t just change that one piece, because each new version is a different shape, so you got to chuck the whole thing and buy a new one.

So, I was reading quotes from industrial design journals from the 1950s when planned obsolescence was really catching on. These designers are so open about it. They actually discuss how fast they can make stuff break and still leaves the consumer with enough faith in the product to go buy another one. It was so intentional.

But stuff cannot break fast enough to keep this arrow afloat, so there’s also “perceived obsolescence.” Now perceived obsolescence convinces us to throw away stuff that is still perfectly useful.

How do they do that? Well, they change the way the stuff looks so if you bought your stuff a couple years ago, everyone can tell that you haven’t contributed to this arrow recently and since the way we demonstrate our value is by contributing to this arrow, it can be embarrassing.

[I know.] I’ve have had the same fat white computer monitor on my desk for 5 years. My co-worker just got a new computer. She has a flat shiny sleek flat screen monitor. It matches her computer, it matches her phone, even her pen stand. [It looks cool.] She looks like she is driving in space ship central and I, I look like I have a washing machine on my desk.

Fashion is another prime example of this. Have you ever wondered why women's shoe heels go from fat one year to skinny the next to fat to skinny? It is not because there is some debate about which heel structure is the most healthy for women's feet. It's because wearing fat heels in a skinny heel year shows everyone that you haven't contributed to that arrow recently so you're not as valuable as that skinny heeled person next to you or, more likely, in some ad. It's to keep buying new shoes.

Advertisements, and media in general, plays a big role in this.

Each of us in the U.S. is targeted with more than 3,000 advertisements a day.

We each see more advertisements in one year than a people 50 years ago saw in a lifetime. And if you think about it, what is the point of an ad except to make us unhappy with what we have. So, 3,000 times a day, we're told that our hair is wrong, our skin is wrong, clothes are wrong, our furniture is wrong, our cars are wrong, we are wrong but that it can all be made right if we just go shopping.

Media also helps by hiding all of this and all of this, so the only part of the materials economy we see is the shopping. The extraction, production and disposal all happens outside our field of vision.

So, in the U.S. we have more stuff than ever before, but polls show that our national happiness is actually declining. Our national happiness peaked sometime in the 1950s, the same time as this consumption mania exploded. Hmmm. Interesting coincidence.

I think I know why. We have more stuff but we have less time for the things that really make us happy: family, friends, leisure time. We're working harder than ever. Some analysts say that we have less leisure time now than in Feudal Society.

And do you know what the two main activities are that we do with the scant leisure time we have? Watch TV and shop. In the U.S., we spend 3 - 4 times as many hours shopping as our counterparts in Europe do.

So we are in this ridiculous situation where we go to work, maybe two jobs even, and we come home and we're exhausted so we plop down on our new couch and watch TV and the commercials tell us "YOU SUCK" so gotta go to the mall to buy something to

feel better, then we have to go to work more to pay for the stuff we just bought so we come home and we're more tired so you sit down and watch more T.V. and it tells you to go to the mall again and we're on this crazy work-watch-spend treadmill and we could just stop.

## **Disposal**

So in the end, what happens to all the stuff we buy anyway? At this rate of consumption, it can't fit into our houses even though the average U.S. house size has doubled in this country since the 1970s.

It all goes out in the garbage. And that brings us to disposal. This is the part of the materials economy we all know the most because we have to haul the junk out to the curb ourselves. Each of us in the United States makes 4 1/2 pounds of garbage a day. That is twice what we each made thirty years ago.

All of this garbage [stuff we bought] either gets dumped in a landfill, which is just a big hole in the ground, or if you're really unlucky, first it's burned in an incinerator and then dumped in a landfill. Either way, both pollute the air, land, water and, don't forget, change the climate.

Incineration is really bad. Remember those toxics back in the production stage? Burning the garbage releases the toxics up into the air. Even worse, it actually makes new super toxics. Like dioxin.

Dioxin is the most toxic man made substance known to science. And incinerators are the number one source of dioxin. That means that we could stop the number one source of the most toxic man-made substance known just by stopping burning the trash. We could stop it today.

Now some companies don't want to deal with building landfills and incinerators here, so they just export the disposal too.

What about recycling? Does recycling help? Yes, recycling helps. Recycling reduces the garbage at this end and it reduces the pressure to mine and harvest new stuff at this

end. Yes, Yes, Yes, we should all recycle. But recycling is not enough. Recycling will never be enough. For a couple reasons.

First, the waste coming out of our houses is just the tip of the iceberg. For every one garbage can of waste you put out on the curb, 70 garbage cans of waste were made upstream just to make the junk in that one garbage can you put out on the curb. So even if we could recycle 100 percent of the waste coming out of our households, it doesn't get to the core of the problem.

Also much of the garbage can't be recycled, either because it contains too many toxics or it is actually designed NOT to be recyclable in the first place. Like those juice packs with layers of metal and paper and plastic all smooshed together. You can never separate those for true recycling.

So you see, it is a system in crisis. All along the way, we are bumping up against a lot of limits. From changing climate to declining happiness, it's just not working.

But the good thing about such an all pervasive problem is that there are so many points of intervention. There are people working here on saving forests and here on clean production.<sup>80</sup> People working on labor rights and fair trade and conscious consuming and blocking landfills and incinerators and, very importantly, on taking back our government so it is really is by the people for the people.

All this work is critically important but things are really going to start moving when we see the connections, when we see the big picture. When people along this system get united, we can reclaim and transform this linear system into something new, a system that doesn't waste resources or people.

## **Another Way**

Because what we really need to chuck is this old-school throw-away mindset. There's a new school of thinking on this stuff and it's based on sustainability and equity: Green Chemistry, Zero Waste, Closed Loop Production, Renewable Energy, Local living Economies. It's already happening.

Some people say it's unrealistic, idealistic, that it can't happen. But I say the ones who are unrealistic are those that want to continue on the old path. That's dreaming.

Remember that old way didn't just happen by itself. It's not like gravity that we just have live with. People created it. And we're people too. So let's create something new.

# Session Two

## ECONOMICS

In our first session, viewing Annie Leonard's video *The Story of Stuff*, we heard about the main features of the way that the US economy operates, and how, facilitated by globalisation, all national economies reproduce these phenomena to a greater or lesser degree.

At the moment we in Australia are, along with the rest of the world, recovering from an economic recession. This recession began with the collapse of two US lending institutions, with the somewhat amusing names of Freddie-Mac and Fannie-Mae, and very quickly engulfed the world, illustrating how something that happens in a distant part of the world, can affect our economy here in Australia.

This session's exercise is for you to

- 1. Locate newspaper or journal articles about the effects of the current recession in Australia. Perhaps you can find one on the internet, or locate one through a visit to your local library. Remember that the search aspect of the exercise can be a group activity.**
- 2. Write a two or three paragraph summary of the article in your situation analysis learning journal, highlighting the links between the local and the global, and any implications for mission and ministry which you are able to discern.**

# Session Three

---

---

## TRADE: EXPORTS

---

---

We saw in *The Story of Stuff* that when it comes to the global cycle of production, the mining and export of raw materials necessary for the manufacturing process has a vital role to play.

In the geographical area of our Diocese the mining and exporting of coal is a major contributor to the Australian and the world economy and as you are probably aware the Port of Newcastle services Australia's largest export industry.

The first coal was exported to India in the vessel *The Hunter* in 1799. In 1913 a record 5,236, 621 tonnes of coal were shipped through the port and in 1987 a monthly tonnage record of 3,326,020 was loaded in June. These figures illustrate the enormous size of the operation.

This session's exercise is in three parts and you should write your notes in your situation analysis learning journal:

- 3. Make a list of as many countries as you can identify to which coal is exported from Newcastle, and if you are able to, identify the main uses those countries make of coal.**
- 4. List the main controversies surrounding this coal trade.**
- 5. In what ways is the Church involved in this economic enterprise and how should it respond to the controversies?**

# Session Four

---

---

## TRADE: IMPORTS

---

---

In the introduction to this audit we highlighted the degree to which our purchases of fresh produce at the supermarket have been expedited by globalisation, with goods now available from a wide range of countries.

This session's exercise aims to help you to understand your participation in this global market of products.

- 6. When you next go shopping note the overseas countries from which your purchases have come.**
- 7. Select one of these countries, and undertake some research on it. Write a couple of paragraphs on what life is like for people living in that country.**
- 8. What things might we do to improve their situation?**
- 9. What are the implications for our mission and ministry?**

# Session Five

---

---

## LAND USE

---

---

As Annie Leonard made clear in her video, land use is a major global issue these days with transnational corporations exploiting the limited resources of vulnerable countries.

Horror stories abound about forests being cleared to provide grazing for beef cattle to satisfy the developed world's need for hamburgers; African countries being persuaded to give up growing food for the local market in favour of crops such as soya beans which have become a health food in the West; or Latin American pasture land turned into high-tech cultivation of carnations for wealthy Westerners to wear in their lapels when they go to the opera.

In the Amazon rainforests are being cut down and indigenous communities destroyed; across Africa the use of pesticides and fertilisers is polluting the lakes, rivers and streams, and globally more and more areas of the world are becoming deserts. This session's exercise will help you to reflect upon these realities.

- 10. Briefly describe an example of exploitation of the land you have read about, or seen on TV recently. This might be overseas or here in Australia.**
- 11. In what ways do we benefit from this exploitation?**
- 12. Who is disadvantaged by it?**
- 13. What could be done to remedy the situation?**

## Session Six

---

---

# MIGRATION

---

---

We are sometimes tempted to think that migration is a modern “problem”, but it is in reality a phenomenon which has occurred down through human history as smaller or larger groups of people set out to escape famine, disease, wars or persecutions in order to find a better life for their families.

Globalisation with its propensity for making our world seem smaller has, in our time, made migration an option for many more people.

For example, since Poland has joined the European Union, large numbers of Polish workers have migrated to Great Britain where jobs are available, wages better and the standard of living higher. A great many of these migrants work in the building and related trades and are making a significant contribution to the British economy.

Some nations, particularly in North and South America, are almost entirely made up of populations which in the past migrated from European countries.

The same can be claimed for the European settlement of Australia, where migration, some of it as in the case of penal settlements, forced rather than voluntary, is part of our founding history.

There are few of us in Australia, not members of the indigenous Aboriginal population, who cannot trace our roots back over a few generations to a migrant family or individual. This has created a vibrant multicultural community which has not of course, been without particular problems.

The acceptance of new migrants is a major social, cultural and political issue at this time. Over recent years boatloads of people fleeing disorder in other countries, particularly in Sri Lanka, Iraq and Afghanistan, have been intercepted in Australian waters with their passengers transported to the processing facility the Government has built on Christmas Island.

In the case of migration from Middle-Eastern countries some would argue that it is intervention by forces from the Western coalition of nations which instead of establishing stability and security for their populations, has unleashed sectarian violence causing significant numbers to seek refuge in other countries. The situation therefore presents us, our Church and our ministries, with some moral and compassionate issues. It has also become a very contentious political issue.

This session's exercise is a small piece of research. We invite you to identify a family which has migrated to Australia in recent times, perhaps a member of your congregation, a neighbour, a work colleague or friend.

**14. Ask the migrant to share their story with you and make notes in your situation analysis learning journal on:**

**the nature of the situation they needed to escape from,**

**the problems they encountered on the way,**

**what they like about Australian life and**

**what they miss from their former life.**

**15. Complete the exercise by writing a brief paragraph on what the Church could or already does offer by way on a ministry to new migrants.**

# Session Seven

---

---

## HEALTH

---

---

Our world is currently in the grip of a pandemic of swine flu. It is perhaps symptomatic of our age that something as serious as this disease which could kill many more people has become the theme of a host of internet games. Typical of them is “Swine Flu: Pandemic Panic” in which the player has to pick up as many Mexicans as possible and drop them into a Quarantine Station. Those inside the station are saved: those left outside die, and the aim of course is very humanitarian - to save as many as possible. Mexico was no doubt chosen as the location for the game because it was in Mexico that swine flu first appeared.

In real life, of course, the pandemic is not an amusing game and quarantine stations or their equivalent medical facilities are not universally available.

The wealthier countries with their advanced clinics and the means to purchase vaccinations for the majority of their populations lie at one end of the scale, whilst Third World countries with poor health provision and infrastructures lie at the other. We are fortunate to be included in the first category and our survival rates will be higher than that in many countries.

The situation serves to remind us of our vulnerability on the one hand, but also the way in which globalisation offers the rapid development, testing and distribution of vaccines as a lifeline to many populations.

In September 2009 Australia became the first country in the world to launch a full-scale nationwide vaccination programme, using a vaccine that was

manufactured and tested here. Many poor nations are not in a position to offer vaccinations on this scale.

In this session's exercise you are asked to undertake a small research exercise on health (which can be a group exercise where possible). Two of the basic international indicators for health are those of infant mortality and life expectancy and comparative figures can be found on many websites. Our exercise this session aims to help us to understand these better.

- 16. First establish the infant mortality and life expectancy figures for Australia (it will be important to discover the statistics for Australians in general, and also, by way of comparison the statistics for aboriginal peoples in Australia as well).**
- 17. Then select a Third World country, perhaps one of Australia's neighbours, or a country you have visited and have an interest in, and find out the figures for infant mortality and life expectancy there.**
- 18. Write two or three paragraphs by way of explanation for any differences, what action we could take as Australians, and any implications you can discern for mission or ministry.**

# Session Eight

---

---

## CLIMATE CHANGE

---

---

The issue of climate change tops the global agenda these days. World leaders, Australia's Prime Minister included, went off to the Copenhagen Summit towards the end of 2009 with high expectations that participating nations would agree a protocol that would see greenhouse gas emissions reduced. But this was not to be, as both developed nations and developing nations expressed reservations: the former because meeting targets would inevitably effect production, trade and profits, and the latter arguing that they needed special consideration to enable them to catch up with the industrialisation of the West.

Hopes that a binding protocol could be agreed at a follow-up meeting in November/December 2010 at Cancun in Mexico were not realised. However agreement on cuts in carbon emissions and the setting up of a fund to help developing countries were brokered. Whilst this did not satisfy activists many participants regard it as a platform on which comprehensive agreement can be built.

Here in Australia climate change has become a divisive political issue both between and within political parties. The debates are fuelled by those who argue that climate change is a phenomenon brought about by human actions upsetting, perhaps irrevocably, the balance of nature, and sceptics who insist that the climatic changes we are experiencing are natural processes that have waxed and waned throughout human history.

Each side accuses the other of falsifying scientific data. You may have seen on

Australian television a visiting British aristocrat, Lord Monckton, a climate change sceptic, publicly dismissing American Al Gore's award winning documentary on climate change as a pack of lies.

Britain's 350 year old prestigious scientific academy, the Royal Society, on its website (<http://royalsociety.org/General>) summarising its response to eight of the misleading arguments about climate change says:

Our scientific understanding of climate change is sufficiently sound to make us highly confident that greenhouse gas emissions are causing global warming. Science moves forward by challenge and debate and this will continue. However, none of the current criticisms of climate science, nor the alternative explanations of global warming are well enough founded to make not taking any action the wise choice. The science clearly points to the need for nations to take urgent steps to cut greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere, as much and as fast as possible, to reduce the more severe aspects of climate change. We must also prepare for the impacts of climate change, some of which are already inevitable.

This session's exercise invites you to engage with the climate change debate.

- 19. What were the major issues discussed at the Copenhagen and Cancun summits?**
- 20. What are some of the implications for Australia?**
- 21. Care of creation is one of the Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion. What activities or actions could your local Church promote by way of practical action on climate change?**

# Session Nine

---

---

## TECHNOLOGY

---

---

Access to increasingly sophisticated technology is both enabling developed economies to maximise profits, and helping those developing countries which can afford it to make extraordinary progress. Not so long ago California's Silicon Valley was the recognised centre of technological innovation. Today the focus has shifted to developing countries' sites such as India's city of Bangalore.

Technological innovation gives us access to a great deal of "stuff" - to use Annie Leonard's word - mobile phones, iPods, MP3 players, laptops - which have changed the face of the communications and entertainment world.

One of the downsides, as Annie pointed out, is the obsolescence built into these technologies so that we are forced to update our equipment, and throw away our old model. Even this has led to a lucrative trade such as the computers for which we have no use being recycled to poor economies such as those in Africa.

Technology can help or hinder the workforce. It can make our work more efficient and it can put people out of work. Modern telecommunications make the outsourcing of work possible and cost-saving. Hence the growth of call centres based in developing countries.

The American United Airlines has a call centre in India; Telecom New Zealand's call centre is in the Philippines; as is Australia's internet provider TPG; thus creating unemployment issues in the countries in which the business

is based, while on the other hand creating new work in developing economies.

Modern technologies can liberate people or be employed for social and political control. The information superhighway created by the internet is sometimes described as anarchic, giving people free access to information that in a past age was difficult and sometimes impossible to track down. The Wikileaks phenomenon is a good example of this.

On the other hand, in Singapore and China authoritarian regimes have found ways of limiting access to material which they don't want citizens to have.

The internet search engine Google was criticised for putting economics before principle and striking a deal with China to provide a new self-censoring search engine which prevents access to any site the Chinese government disapproves of. These days many companies use monitoring software to keep tabs on us in the workplace.

Companies are able to deduce our preferences via our use of the internet, and send us tempting offers of consumer items, and most governments are in a position to monitor our e-mail communications. Online shopping and trading is becoming the norm for many of us. Then too, there is the really dark side of these technologies with their ability to create worldwide networks of child trafficking and abuse.

Globally then, the technologies we use every day are not "neutral" but raise social, political and moral issues.

- 22. Make a list of the technologies that you personally own or have access to.**
- 23. Write a brief reflection on the degree to which these technologies liberate or enslave you.**
- 24. Write a second brief reflection on ways that contemporary technology can help or hinder mission and ministry.**

# Session Ten

---

---

## MEDIA

---

---

We hear a great deal these days about the power of the international media to shape human life. Annie Leonard drew our attention to one aspect of this when she talked about the way that we are bombarded with thousands of images daily through newspaper and journal advertising, television and radio adverts and billboards, all urging us to purchase certain products. It is not simply that we are being urged to buy particular products; such advertising actually creates and maintains the consumer culture to which we fall victim.

There is virtually no aspect of life that escapes media attention and involvement these days. We get hour by hour accounts of the situation in the war in Afghanistan; we follow our favourite sporting events live as they are being played out; we become the audience of rock concerts or operas; we are educated about engineering marvels, the natural world or the history of the monarchy; we test our knowledge against that of contestants in televised quiz shows; we relax in front of our favourite soap operas or drama series. And no matter where we go in the world we are likely to be able to keep following the happenings in Ramsay or Coronation Streets.

We can be easily lulled into the belief that the international media gives us a faithful representation of reality, but numerous studies have indicated that this is not always the case and that the media frequently reproduce the social, political, economic and cultural views of their owners and that there is therefore an element of propaganda in them.

One of the current great media moguls is of course our own Rupert Murdoch who owns or has an interest in newspapers, radio, and television stations around the globe. Such is his influence in Britain for example, that it has proved to be the case in recent instances that whichever political party is backed by his *Sun* newspaper, the largest selling broadsheet, will win an election. Such is the power of the media to decisively influence political views and voting.

Thus, prior to the 2010 election in Britain people are waited to see which party the *Sun* newspaper would support. It was the Conservative Party who eventually formed a coalition government with the Liberal Democrats.

Some commentators assert that Rupert Murdoch's decisions are not simply based on his own political creed, but also the economic issue of which party will create the most favourable conditions for the growth of his media empire.

This is not to argue that all the media are instruments of power and control for they can also be used to foster debate and analysis of repressive situations and to encourage people to mobilise for action.

Such is the case, for example, of the enigmatic Subcommandante Marcos, leader of the liberation movement for the indigenous Mayan people of Mexico. This revolutionary leader and advocate of liberation theology is armed not with a gun and ammunition belt but with a laptop, through which he communicates with his followers and brings the plight of the Mayans to the attention of the world.

Our exercises in this session will help us to focus on the media.

- 25. Watch out for an international news item and note how it is reported in a range of different media sources, e.g. TV, newspaper, radio.**
- 26. Briefly analyse any influences that you detect underlying the report and what messages is it trying to communicate.**

**27. Reflect again on the sources of information you regarded as reliable in your *Personal Audit* in situation analysis. Do you want to make any substitutions or additions to your list?**

# Session Eleven

---

---

## IDEOLOGY

---

---

You will sometimes hear it said that we live in a world of competing ideologies. Many of us grew up in the era following the Second World War when the two dominant ideologies were those of capitalism and communism. The period that ensued was known as The Cold War which was characterised by the confrontation between the United States of America and its allies and the Soviet Bloc. This ideological standoff produced a rapid proliferation of nuclear weapons and led to flashpoints like the Cuban missile crisis. Our world was divided into goodies and baddies and the ideological battle between us dominated our lives.

In Australia we were constantly warned about the perils of the Domino Effect: if one Asian country fell victim to communism other Asian countries would topple, and this ideological conviction led us into the Korean and Vietnam wars. The symbols of the end of the Cold War were *perestroika* in Russia and the dismantling of the Berlin Wall.

But the end of this particular confrontation has not put an end to ideological conflicts and they continue to dominate geopolitics today. One of the clearest ideological confrontations is now that between Muslim fundamentalism and the democratic tradition. We should note of course that fundamentalism is not confined to Islam but is manifested in several other world religions, notably Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism.

What do we mean by ideology? In the 1980's the World Council of Churches established a unit to promote dialogue between churches and ideologies which defined ideology as:

A system of thought or blueprint used to interpret society and man's (sic) place in society, the function of which is either to legitimate the existing structures of society or to change them.

So in other words, whether we are happy with the way that society is, or wish to change society we are forming that view on the basis of our interior map or ideology, whether we recognise it or not.

You may have seen the amusing cartoon of two angels welcoming a very well dressed man into heaven. One angel, extending his hand is saying, "Congratulations. What got you here is your total lack of commitment to any ideology". It is an ironic comment on the fact that although we may believe we are, none of us is free from ideology. Without an ideology we are unable to make sense of the world we inhabit.

When in an early exercise in our *Personal Audit* in situation analysis we were asked to describe the features of the kind of society we would like to live in, we were in fact identifying some of the features of our internalised map, our ideology.

In fact the whole of the *Personal, Work and Vocational Audit*, insofar as it helps us appreciate why we view the world in the way we do, is an exercise in ideological clarification. So in a way by looking at global ideologies from the perspective of our personal ideology, we have come full circle.

This raises the interesting question of whether Christianity itself is an ideology.

In the view of the World Council of Churches there are of necessity ideological elements within Christianity. Some have argued that in offering people an alternative interpretation of our world and humanity's place within it, Jesus was acting ideologically.

Others have contended that the Gospel is the ultimate critique to which all ideologies must be subjected. The Roman Catholic theologian Herbert McCabe suggested that just as Marxism for example offers a critique of Capitalism, so theology is the critique of the ideology of Christianity.

We will explore these themes in this session's exercise:

- 28. Make a list of the main ideological conflicts you can identify in our world today.**
- 29. What are some of the ideological influences that you can detect in today's Church?**
- 30. Write a paragraph explaining how you think theology might contribute to offering a critique of Christianity.**

# Session Twelve

---

---

## LIFE IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

---

---

We may sometimes hear it said that one of the effects of globalisation is that we now all live in a “global village”. This term was first associated as long ago as the 1960’s with the work of media studies professor Marshall McLuhan whose argument was that the globe had been contracted into a village by information technology. This technology was making information accessible to every point of the globe at the same time, imploding social and political activities and making humans much more aware of their responsibilities towards one another.

Fifty years on of course the speed of communication has increased vastly, and the technologies we discussed in *Session Nine* have completely altered social life so that through the internet we can join online communities of people of shared interests rather than for instance, joining a local club.

We are also these days instantly aware of human suffering whether it be in wars in the Middle-East, an earthquake in Haiti, bushfires in South Australia, or floods in Queensland.

We cannot insulate ourselves from suffering in the way that previous generations were able to. We feel impelled to respond whether by contributing to relief funds, offering up a prayer, pausing to reflect, or joining a campaigning organisation. We can no longer remain untouched or untroubled.

There are those who warn us that we ought not to over-romanticise life in the global village as a kind of new Eden. McLuhan himself did not picture the Global Village as a place of agreement and tranquillity. Rather it is the site of discontinuity, division and diversity in which ideas and lifestyles are contested. It is not a comfortable place to be as people wrestle with competing beliefs, behaviours, and ideologies.

In this concluding exercise you are asked to look back over all the global themes we have investigated, and the way that these impinge upon your life and the life of the Church.

Then in your situation analysis journal summarise in around 250 words each:

**31. The personal implications for you of life in the global village.**

**32. Any roles in the global village you can suggest for the Church's witness and ministry?**

You need to bring your situation analysis journal to the session at the next learning weekend so that you can discuss it with your fellow participants.

Please therefore do not submit your situation analysis journal to your local group leader until after the learning weekend.

## Further Reading on Globalisation

The more “popular” books include:

Chomsky, Noam: *Hegemony or Survival: America’s Quest for Global Dominance*, Allen & Unwin Australia, 2003

Friedman, Thomas: *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, Anchor Books, New York, 2000

Giddens, Anthony: *Runaway World: How Globalisation is Reshaping Our Lives*, Profile Books, 2002

Legrain, Philip: *Open World: The Truth About Globalisation*, Abacus, 2002

Mofid, Kamran: *Globalisation for the Common Good*, Shephard-Walwyn, 2002

Pilger, John: *The New Rulers of the World*, Verso, 2002

Singer, Peter: *One World: The Ethics of Globalisation*, Yale University Press, 2002

Starr, Amory: *Naming the Enemy: Anti-Corporate Movements Confront Globalisation*, Zed Books, 2001

Stiglitz, Joseph: *Globalisation and its Discontents*, Penguin Books, London, 2004

If you are looking for something more academic, try:

Hardt, Michael & Negri, Antonio: *Empire*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass, 2001

Waters, Malcolm: *Globalisation Reader*, Blackwell, 1999

