

2004

Faith and Responsibility in the Global Village (Chapter 5 of My Place in the World

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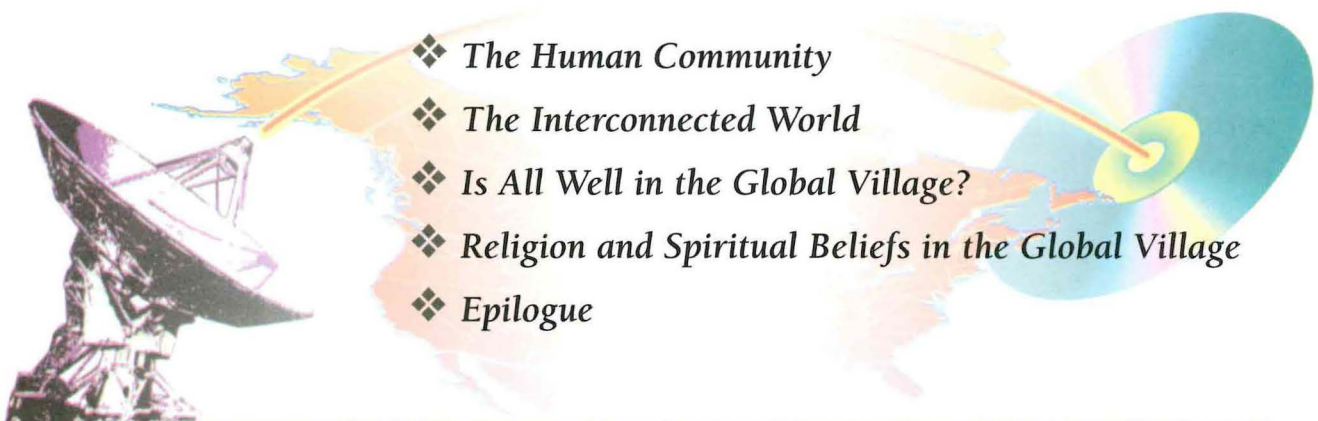
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Faith and Responsibility in the Global Village

DEFINITION

community: people sharing common interests and concerns

In many ways, people around the world are becoming one big community. The media are connecting us. So are business, industry, and culture. This chapter explores the character of the global village, suggesting how people of religious faith might point the way forward so that all members of the human community may enjoy greater security and a more equitable share in what the world has to offer.

- 
- ❖ *The Human Community*
 - ❖ *The Interconnected World*
 - ❖ *Is All Well in the Global Village?*
 - ❖ *Religion and Spiritual Beliefs in the Global Village*
 - ❖ *Epilogue*

By the end of this chapter you will have explored these issues:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ❖ sacred texts regarding the individual's responsibility within community | ❖ awareness of human connectedness in the global village |
| ❖ ethics for community—a world community | ❖ how people with religious or spiritual beliefs respond to humanitarian needs |
| ❖ the role of the media—newspapers, magazines, radio, television, the Internet | |

The Human Community

DEFINITION

village: a group of houses and associated buildings in a community smaller than a town

What Unites Us?

Think about the word “village” for a moment. What ideas come to your mind? Perhaps “small.” Perhaps “community.” You might say

- that people in a village share their lives more freely than people in larger towns or cities
- that villagers’ lives are more open to one another
- that villagers support one another economically in ways unknown to most urban dwellers
- that they help one another emotionally during difficult times

Then again, maybe you see a negative side to such intimacy. Perhaps villagers also know the weaknesses and failings of neighbours more than city dwellers ever could. And in villages, such knowledge, in the form of hurtful gossip, has a way of travelling quickly!

In 1962, Marshall McLuhan first used the phrase “global village.” McLuhan was a Canadian professor of English and Communications who specialized in thinking about how communications and technology influenced human society. Writing well before the Internet was developed, he pointed to how modern communications technology had begun to shrink the world. McLuhan died in 1980. Many people today argue that the Internet is exactly what he predicted.

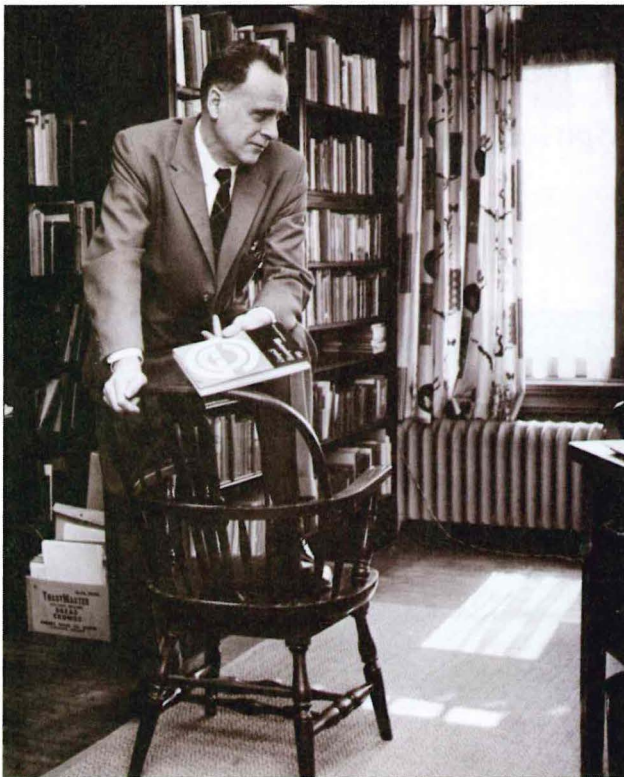


Fig. 5.1 Marshall McLuhan. In books such as *Understanding Media* (1966), McLuhan claimed that electronic media, especially television, were changing the world by giving it the characteristics of a global village. Many societies that had been isolated were now being brought into nearly instant communication with much of the rest of the world.

In the global village today, news travels extremely quickly. Satellites, fibre-optic cables, radio, television, telephones, and the Internet all shrink time and distance. We often hear about an event on the other side of the world within minutes of its happening. Perhaps we even see it happening. We may hear about an event across the world more quickly than we hear about one across the bay. For example, you might learn the results of the World Cup Soccer final faster than the results of a high-school sports event that took place in a nearby town the night before.



Fig. 5.2 In 2002, for the first time in history, two countries, Japan and Korea, co-hosted soccer's most prestigious event. Here, buildings in Seoul (SOHL), Korea, use room lights to form "2002," celebrating their co-hosting of the 17th World Cup. On June 30, over a billion people around the world watched the World Cup final between Brazil and Germany. Brazil won 2–0.

Reflections

1. Give an example of a major national or international news event that you heard about before you heard about a provincial event that happened at the same time.
2. Research Marshall McLuhan's ideas about the global village and write a 150-word biography of McLuhan, including a statement of his theories.

Many factors work together today to help make McLuhan's global village a reality. In some ways, advertisers, the media, business, and entertainment work hand in hand to unite us. A soccer team from Kampala, Uganda, arrives in Oslo, Norway, for a World Junior Football Championship. The team members wear Nike gear from head to toe. An hour later, a team from Guayaquil (gweye-uh-KEEL), Ecuador, arrives, looking like an Adidas advertisement. By sponsoring teams and providing them with clothing and equipment bearing their company logos, companies such as Nike and Adidas not only advertise their products, they make it possible for teams that otherwise could not afford the trip to go to world events. These two brands compete with several others in a global market reaching from Indonesia to Newfoundland and Labrador. And we might measure their success by noting how recognizable

their logos are around the world. In this way, advertisers help contribute to our sense of being one community. The success of such companies as Nike and Adidas suggests something else as well: many people around the world like to be known by the brands they wear.

Much else unites the world:

- Radio stations around the world broadcast the same pop songs to listeners who speak a hundred different languages, helping promote English as the first truly global language.
- Fast-food chains such as McDonald's and Burger King hope to see everyone eating their burgers.
- In every nation, environmentalists wonder if the human race has the will to reduce global warming.
- Religious believers around the world wonder what role religion might have in reducing militarism and economic disparity.
- In the name of globalization, businesses ask how they might find new markets or move production to regions with lower labour costs.



Fig. 5.3 McDonald's in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania. Internationally known food chains can act as unifiers of the global village. "Every once in a while when I am traveling abroad, I need to indulge in a burger and a bag of McDonald's french fries. For all I know, I have eaten McDonald's burgers and fries in more countries in the world than anyone, and I can testify that they all really do taste the same." (Thomas L. Friedman, American journalist and author of *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*)

Consider the Olympic Games. This massive competition takes place every four years in a major city. Countries from around the world send their best athletes to compete against one another. The economic, political, and religious beliefs and practices of these countries are very different, but their athletic goals are the same.

Meanwhile, something else takes place that helps the world tune into this massive event. Multinational companies such as Coca-Cola, Nokia, Xerox, and Honda compete to be official sponsors of the Games, which in turn helps pay for television broadcasts. Billions of people are united by patriotism, entertainment, business, and the media.

What Divides Us?

Although there are many factors that help unify the global village, there are also many factors that continue to divide the village. Unlike many “traditional” villages, our global village is populated by people vastly different from one another. Language, race and ethnicity, religion, age, economics, as well as a number of other factors divide the citizens of the global village.

The whole world took notice when hijackers crashed two passenger jets into the World Trade Center and one into the Pentagon in the United States on September 11, 2001. The world suddenly became much smaller, like one village focused on a major event affecting all its inhabitants. Yet not everyone viewed the attacks in the same way. Most people in western nations were horrified. They saw those who flew the airplanes into the towers as terrorists who murdered thousands of innocent people. They were frightened to see terrorist causes in far-off lands suddenly hitting closer to home.



Fig. 5.4 Some of the Canadian team enter the stadium during the opening ceremonies of the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics in the United States. Investigate the history of the Olympics to see when athletes with physical challenges started to participate in the regular Olympics. What does this change suggest about the place of people with physical challenges in the world?

Fig. 5.5 *The people of Newfoundland and Labrador were profoundly affected by the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001. As the world became aware of the dangers that day, airplanes were ordered out of the sky and all flights to and from the United States were cancelled. Many flights already en route to the United States were diverted to airports in the province. Here, 37 diverted planes line the runways of Gander International Airport, leaving the region to aid about 6500 stranded passengers. The people of Gander, a town with a population of under 12 000, and other surrounding towns and villages invited these travellers and business people, who were fearful and shocked by the events in their home country, into their homes or centres hurriedly set up to care for them, feeding and supporting them until the planes were allowed back in the air.*



At the same time, in a number of centres in the Arab world, some people celebrated the success of those who brought down the towers. Like the men who took over the planes, many of these people saw the United States as a godless, materialistic empire that oppressed the Palestinian people by supporting Israel.

Before that tragic day, few non-Muslims in the western world knew much about Islam. And after the attacks, many at first blamed all Muslims and acted against them with intolerance and sometimes violence. Others, like Newfoundlanders in St. John's (see chapter 1, page 11), took steps to tell the public that most Muslims considered the terrorists a fringe, extremist group. They pointed out that the majority of Muslims would say that Allah would never encourage such destruction. As a result of September 11, many non-Muslims were encouraged to learn more about Islam in order to understand it more and to separate it from terrorists. September 11 also underlined the fact that we are all connected to one another, even with our religious differences.



CHECKPOINTS

1. Define "community."
2. Define "human community."
3. Define "village."
4. Define "global village."



Activities

1. Use a t-chart to list factors or events—other than those discussed in this section—that unite the world and that divide the world. In coming up with your list, think of the different dimensions of human life, for example, economic, religious, linguistic, musical, psychological, political, biological, medical, and artistic. Below are a few examples to help get you started.
 - *economic*: destruction caused by a hurricane moves people around the world to assist the nation of El Salvador
 - *religious*: followers of several faiths work together to bring about fair housing in a city
 - *linguistic*: a nation with two official languages experiences tensions over language
 - *musical*: youth all over the world learn the same pop songs
2. A newspaper has asked for your predictions about the human community in the twenty-first century. What predictions would you make for the world's citizens over the next several decades? Give reasons supporting your predictions. Compare your predictions with McLuhan's theories.
3. According to the organization Adbusters Media, "culture jamming" means resisting the spread of global capitalism, especially the domination of local cultures by global brands such as Sony and Nike. Do you think the culture jamming movement unites or divides the human community?

The Interconnected World

We have already considered several examples of the interconnectedness of our world, including communications technology, advertising, international food chains, music, sports, and terrorism. In this section, we will explore in more detail two more examples of how interconnected the world has become: the environment and manufacturing.



Fig. 5.6 Every few years, hundreds of thousands of young people from around the world gather in a major city for World Youth Days, a youth event organized and run by the Roman Catholic Church since 1985. Often the Pope, the head of the Roman Catholic Church, performs a Mass during these days. Toronto, Ontario, hosted this event in the summer of 2002. The religious interests and commitments of these young people attract them to these events, and the global reach of the Roman Catholic Church helps bring them together as an interconnected world community, using modern communications media.

Environment

In November 1997, representatives of the world's developed nations gathered in Kyoto (kee-OH-toh), Japan, to try to come to an agreement about reducing global emissions of **greenhouse gases**. Those who met believe that these gas emissions must be reduced if global warming trends are to be stopped or reversed. They wanted to develop a single standard that all nations would agree to achieve. The final wording of the accord set a major goal: that by the year 2010, the nations that signed would reduce greenhouse gas emissions to below 1990 levels.

Within four years of the November 1997 Kyoto summit, more than 100 nations had signed. But signing the accord, which represents a nation's agreement to the treaty's principles, is only the first step. The government of each nation must still pass (or ratify) the accord before it becomes legally binding. Some of the countries that have signed the accord are concerned about the costs of implementing it. Canada and the United States have both signed, but critics in both nations, including many provincial leaders in Canada, believe that reducing dependence on fossil

DEFINITION

greenhouse gases: carbon dioxide and other gases that allow the sun's radiation to reach the earth but do not allow infrared radiation from the earth to escape into space, thus raising the earth's atmospheric temperature

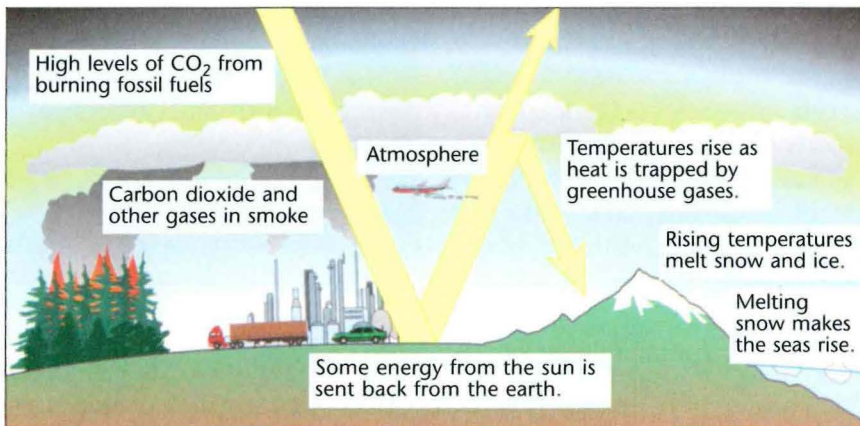


Fig. 5.7 How pollution adds to the greenhouse effect and global warming. The greenhouse effect refers to the warming of the earth's atmosphere that occurs when outgoing long-wave radiation is absorbed by water vapour and carbon dioxide. The way the atmosphere allows solar radiation in, but partly stops it from being lost again to space, is so similar to the way glass helps heat a greenhouse that the process is called "the greenhouse effect." Identify several activities you were involved in during the past week that had a positive or negative effect on the environment. Use a t-chart to record your answers.

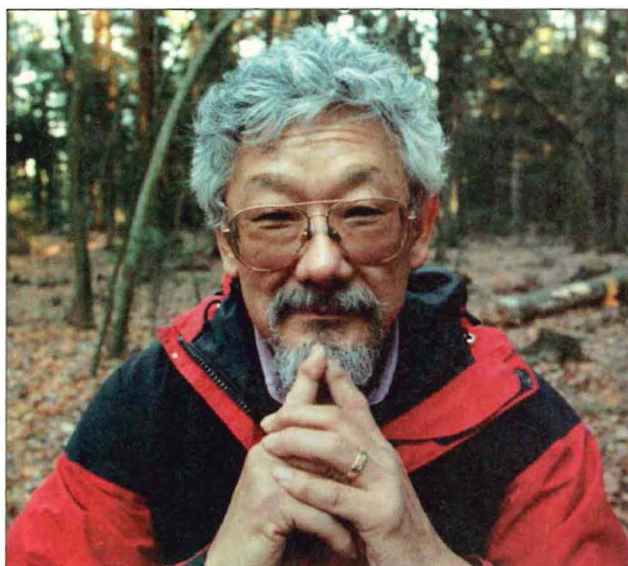


Fig. 5.8 Canadian broadcaster and scientist David Suzuki has long been at the forefront of environmentalism in Canada and around the world. In 1971, a CBC Television program called *The Nature of Things* first aired, with Suzuki as host. Concerned about the impact of modern life on the earth's ecology, Suzuki used his television program to focus attention on environmental issues. Suzuki taped a program in the Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia, to help persuade the United Nations to make an abandoned Haida (HIGH-da) village there a World Heritage Site (WHS). His program resulted in increased support for the WHS designation. In 1985, Suzuki was awarded the United Nations Environmental Program medal for his efforts on behalf of the environment. In 1990, Environment Canada recognized his long years of service to the environment by awarding him the Environmental Achievement Award, and in 1997, he won a Gemini Award as Best Host, for his work on the program "Food or Famine" on CBC's *The Nature of Things*. What is the significance of designating an area of the world as a World Heritage Site? How does such a designation reflect the importance of creation and our role in that importance?

fuels will undermine the value of their large oil reserves, cost jobs, and make the economy less competitive. Because of such economic concerns, many signatory nations' national governments, including that of the United States, have refused to ratify the agreement or to implement policies to meet the Kyoto goal. The Canadian government has ratified the accord, but it continues to seek ways to implement the accord before it actually begins to do so.

Nevertheless, the accord demonstrates that people around the world have come to understand that the environment is an issue affecting everyone.

Manufacturing

The way consumer goods are manufactured today also illustrates how our world has become interconnected. The soles of the shoes you are wearing may have been manufactured in Indonesia the same week that the upper parts of the shoes were produced in Bangladesh. Both these parts may have been shipped for final assembly in Thailand. The shoes then may have been shipped to Canada, with the profits on their sale going to an American or French multinational corporation.

Manufacturers of sporting goods, clothing, and electronic goods may be telling the truth when they claim that they hire no children in their overseas factories. But they cannot guarantee that the subcontractors who complete

some essential parts of their work do not. These manufacturers may also point out that the salaries of those who produce our consumer goods in various developing nations may even be slightly above the average salaries of other workers who have not completed elementary education. Nevertheless, two questions remain.



Fig. 5.9 The interconnectedness of the global village was particularly obvious on the eve of the new millennium as people around the world celebrated the beginning of the new century. Satellites and television allowed billions of people to watch celebrations in different time zones throughout the world.

(above) Auckland in New Zealand was one of the first areas of the world to welcome the new millennium. Here, a Maori warrior calls across Auckland, New Zealand's misty bay with a traditional Maori trumpet as the sun rises Saturday, January 1, 2000. (below) Citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador at Cape Spear, the farthest eastern point of the Americas, were the first in North America to welcome the new century.

Does a fair portion of the price we pay make its way back to the people who produce our goods? Do the workers who make the goods receive a fair salary in comparison with the payments made to athletes and entertainers for telling us to buy those goods?

Our connections to workers in other parts of the world certainly go beyond the economic dimension. We see that workers serve us by providing us with goods. We serve them by providing them with employment. But the relationship is ethical as well. Is it right for us to use the goods they make while ignoring the ethical questions?

We have shown some of the ways that almost everyone on this planet is connected to everyone else. Some of the ways that we are connected perhaps bring many of us hope, for example, when nations agree to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or when a billion people watch the televised opening ceremonies of a summer Olympic Games. Other events may leave us confused, such as the attacks on New York and Washington. Regardless of our response to the events, the fact remains that we are connected to the rest of the human population.



Activities

1. In groups of three or four, research one multinational corporation. Find answers to the following questions.
 - Where are its headquarters?
 - What types of products or services does it offer?
 - Where are its primary markets?
 - Where are its goods produced?

Present this information in the form of a poster. Include on separate strips of paper some of your observations and views about possible side effects of multinational corporations. When your group presents its findings to the class, have the class vote on whether these side effects are benefits, disadvantages, or mixed. Attach the benefits to the left edge of the poster. Attach the disadvantages to the right edge. Attach the mixed effects above or below the poster. Examples of corporations to examine: Nike, Adidas, McDonald's, Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Sony, Ford, Panasonic, Nokia, Ikea, IBM, BMW, Fox.

2. Survey the students in your class, recording the brands they are wearing that day and the number of items from each brand. Graph the results of your survey. What conclusions can you draw from the graph?
3. In pairs, interview students to find out how they feel about wearing brands or logos on their clothing. Compile a list of reasons why students want to wear brands or logos and a list of reasons why they do not.

Reflections

1. Leading up to the year 2000, a movement began among several Christian churches to pressure banks and governments in the developed world to forgive a portion of the debt of the developing world. The seed of this Jubilee 2000 initiative came from the book of Leviticus (le-VIT-i-kus) in the Jewish and Christian scriptures. There God tells Jews to forgive debt, set slaves free, and return property to its original owners every 50 years.

And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family. (Leviticus 25:10)

Jewish historians believe that ancient Israel never did celebrate the Jubilee exactly as it is described in Leviticus. Nevertheless, the principle remains and the Jubilee 2000 movement called for a response to the debt that currently cripples the developing world.

- a. Western banks and governments have discussed debt forgiveness. Divide a page into two columns. Label the left column "Advantages" and the right column "Disadvantages." In the top half of each column list what you think are the advantages and disadvantages of debt forgiveness to the indebted nations. In the bottom half of each column list what the lender nations might see as the advantages and disadvantages of debt forgiveness.
 - b. Some church leaders have argued that the Jubilee 2000 initiative was a perfect way to demonstrate that our world is interconnected, that we are a global village. Do you agree or disagree? What are your reasons?
2. You or members of your family may have watched some of the events of September 11, 2001, either when they happened or after.
 - a. Do you think wide viewership of such broadcasts demonstrates that the world's citizens live in a global village?
 - b. In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, events, viewers could not avoid the religious dimension of the attacks. In the name of their God, the attackers had acted against a nation they viewed as evil and under the control of the devil. Suggest ways that television could increase understanding between peoples of different religions, and ways it could increase misunderstanding and hatred.

Is All Well in the Global Village?

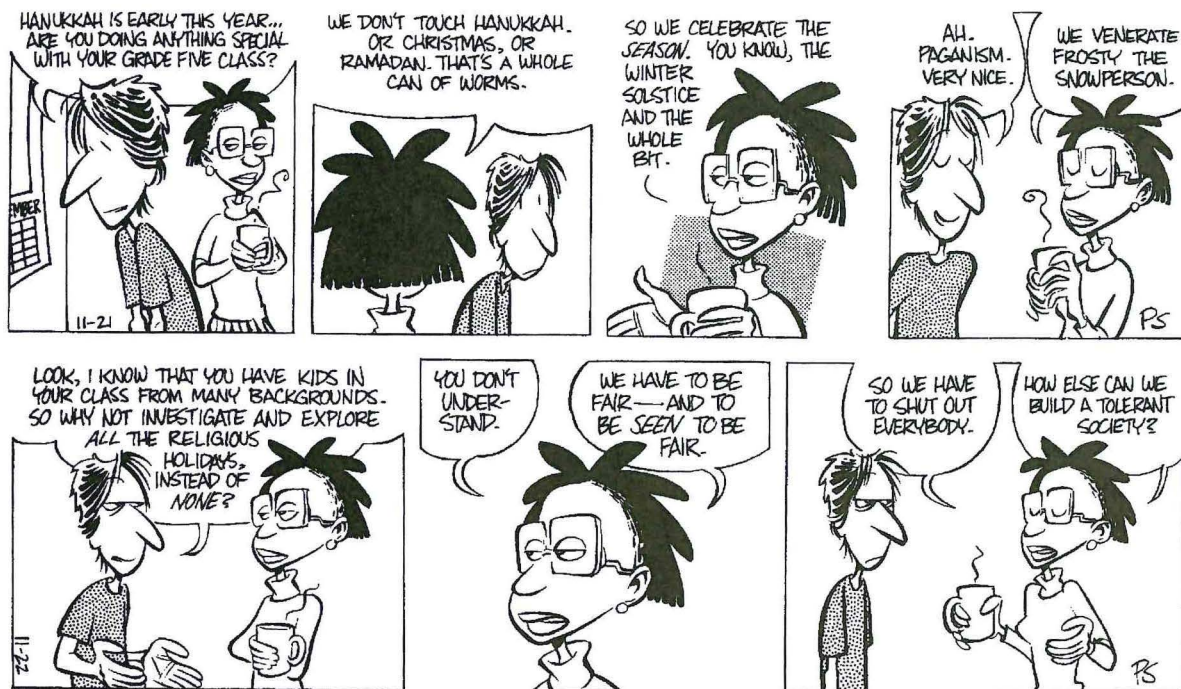
DEFINITION

intolerance: unwillingness to allow people whose opinions or ways of life differ from our own to express those opinions and live life in those different ways; refusing to recognize the right of others to think, live, or worship according to their own beliefs; taking action to prevent them from doing so

Fig. 5.10 What do you think the cartoonist is saying about intolerance? Do you agree with the cartoonist's solution? Why or why not?

Intolerance and the Global Village

We have noted that brands, foods, causes, and language may help give the world a sense of unity or community. We have also shown that there are divisions. The gap between rich and poor remains. To remind the rich of that gap, protesters regularly appear at economic and political meetings to ask this question: Is economic globalization good for everyone and for the planet or is it good just for the wealthy? Ongoing terrorist attacks, in the Middle East and elsewhere, remind us that religion, race, and economic divisions can lead to disastrous results. We hear about various kinds of **intolerance**, including racial, ethnic, linguistic, and religious. Such intolerance finds expression in various places in the world. We probably know of intolerance within our own communities. Often when someone differs from the majority in some way, he or she is shunned by the larger community.



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We may want to ask if we really are a global village. Can a world so divided truly be a village?

On the night of November 14, 1997, two separate gangs assaulted Victoria, BC, teenager Reena Virk. The second group left her to drown in a tidal pool. The murder shocked Canadians. Two facts about the case were especially disturbing. The gangs were largely made up of girls, and the members of those gangs were mostly 14 to 16 years old. Virk was the child of Indo-Canadian parents. The courts could not determine whether her murder was about race or about boyfriends. Either way, it demonstrated one of the worst kinds of intolerance humans are capable of.

A murdered teenager in Victoria is a tragedy. Much larger tragedies have also unfolded during your lifetime, illustrating the fact that there are areas in the global village that need fixing.

One such tragedy took place in Rwanda (ru-WAHN-da), in Africa (see map on page 162). In 1995–96, a tribal civil war in that country cost about 500 000 people their lives. Most of the dead were members of the Tutsi (TOOT-see) tribe, attacked by the government-backed Hutu (HOO-too) tribe. A few moderate Hutus were killed as well—the ones who tried to stop the genocide.

The United Nations supplied about 500 peacekeepers to Rwanda to try to maintain peace. Yet hundreds of thousands of people continued to be killed. Did the West turn a deaf ear and blind eye to these killings by sending so few troops and not giving them power to act in an effective manner? We pride ourselves on being a global village. Why did the West not do more to help? Some people argue that the massacres were tolerated because the West has few business and economic interests in Rwanda. They point out that the West depends on the oil of the Middle East and therefore involves itself directly and indirectly in the politics of that region. There is nothing comparable in Rwanda, they argue, that holds the West's interest.

CASE STUDY

João Matawana: One Man's Struggle against Intolerance

As a young man, João [zho-ow] Matawana fled to Zaire [zye-EER; now the Democratic Republic of the Congo] as a refugee from a



civil war in his native Angola. Later, he found himself a refugee again, and eventually came to Nova Scotia to study for the Christian ministry. In the mid-1990s, he worked in mediation efforts following the Rwandan crisis. Since attempting to retire in Halifax in 1999, João has worked as a reconciliation consultant to the Canadian government, most recently in persuading two rival rebel groups in Burundi to talk about peace with the Burundi government.

In May 2002, João Matawana (below right) received an honorary doctoral degree from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, for his lifetime of reconciliation work in various African nations. In the photograph, he and his wife, Nora, stand next to the Angolan ambassador to Canada, Mr. Puna.





CHECKPOINTS

1. Define intolerance.
2. What were the two most shocking aspects of Reena Virk's murder?
3. Suggest reasons why western nations did not intervene more significantly to stop the Rwandan genocide.

Reflection

Describe an example of intolerance based on difference that you have witnessed, experienced, or read about.



Activity

Using the Internet, research what the world's religions teach about how their followers are to treat those who are different from themselves. Why do some people in those faiths seem to misinterpret these basic teachings?

BRAIN FREEZE



Do you believe that as members of one of the world's wealthiest nations, we have special responsibilities to the global village? Be prepared to explain your answer.

DEFINITION

market economy: also known as “capitalist” and “free enterprise” economy; an economic system in which individual producers own and determine the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services, and in which the government does not intervene excessively in the economy; characterized by the freedom to buy and sell what one wishes; an economy driven by the profit motive

Economic Development and the Environment: A Tension

Since the early 1990s and the collapse of Soviet communism, we have increasingly heard that the new world order will be characterized by economic growth. Economic globalization, the spread of the **market economy** to all parts of the earth, is supposed to bring wealth to everyone.

For many people, economic globalization has delivered on its promises. Some workers in such nations as Mexico and Singapore have prospered as corporations have moved their manufacturing plants to these countries and away from higher-wage economies such as Canada, Germany, and Japan. The economies of developed western nations generally have expanded despite the movement of many jobs to less-developed nations.

Economic globalization has come at a price, however. As protesters such as the Canadian writer Naomi Klein have pointed out, the globe has been branded—filled with advertising. Logos for companies such as Nike, McDonald’s, Gap, and Sony are simply part of our landscape. These brands are so powerful that they tend to block the creation of local brands.

Other protesters point to the tension between development and environment. As industrial economies have grown, more fuel has been burned and more trees have been cut. Burning fuel and cutting trees provide jobs but take a toll on the environment. More and more, we see that expanding the economy and protecting the environment often are incompatible goals.

Critics of economic globalization also point to labour conditions in the nations where many goods are manufactured. In some cases, the consumer goods we buy are produced by children. In the case of electronic products, we enjoy relatively low prices in Canada because women in Indonesia, China, Thailand, and other nations work on these products for very low salaries. Critics argue that these are the true costs of economic globalization, and that these costs are too high.

Some critics of economic globalization have identified a fourth problem: Is it really global? In *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*,

Thomas Friedman argues that a billion people are missing out on the growth in the global economy. He picks that number because that is how many people have never made a telephone call. They simply are not connected electronically. They have too few jobs. And their villages offer no access to the world's markets. Thus, they can neither buy nor sell on the global market. This disparity is not just between such regions as Sierra Leone in Africa and the developed West. A gap also exists between less developed countries, for example between Sierra Leone and Mexico.



Fig. 5.12 Award-winning journalist, bestselling author, and activist Naomi Klein was born in Montreal in 1970. For several years, she has travelled throughout North America, Asia, and Europe, tracking the rise of anti-corporate activism. She is a frequent media commentator and has guest lectured at Harvard, Yale, and New York University.

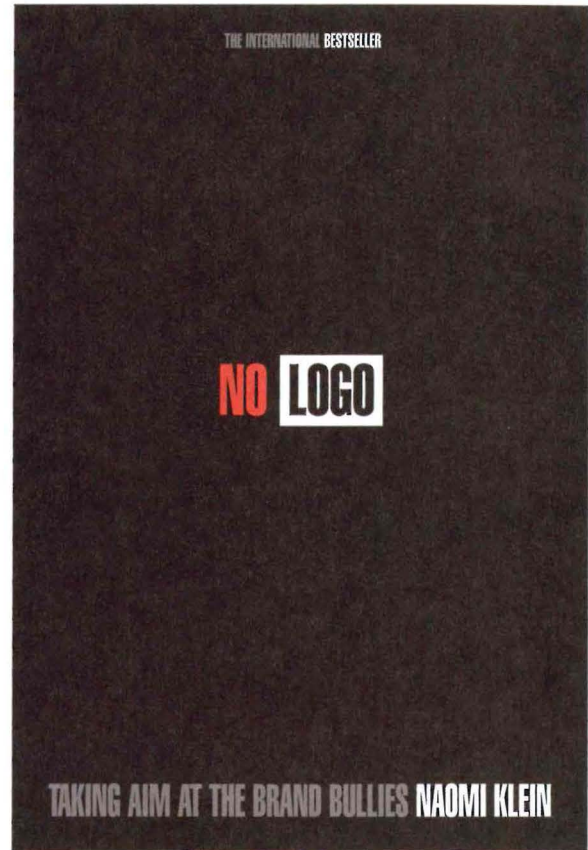


Fig. 5.11 The cover of Naomi Klein's bestselling book *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies*, published by Random House/Viking Canada in 2000. In the book, Klein argues passionately against the growing spread of powerful western companies, represented by their increasingly popular logos, at the expense of local peoples. The New York Times called *No Logo* "a movement bible." In April 2001, *No Logo*, which has been translated into 16 languages, won the Canadian National Business Book Award, and in August 2001 it was awarded Le Prix Méditations in France.

CHECKPOINT

Summarize in one paragraph the tension between economic development and the environment.

Reflections

1. Generate a list of all of the material things, relationships, and experiences that make up your life. Then sort your list into two categories: things you need in order to survive and things you could do without. Underline how many of the things that you could do without are connected to global brands and the global economy. What conclusions can you draw from your lists?
2. A young doctor from Turkey travelled to Iran as part of a medical team. Upon

returning to Turkey, he reported feeling wonderfully relieved when he saw the golden arches of his favourite McDonald's restaurant in the city of Ankara. When he reported this to some Canadian friends, they were dismayed that in a nation as ancient as Turkey, McDonald's had become a symbol of home. Suggest reasons why this doctor's Canadian friends were right to be dismayed. Suggest reasons why they could be pleased, instead.

Activity

For one week, make an effort to spend money only on things you can categorize as a "need" (e.g., lunch at the school cafeteria). Do not buy anything that you could categorize as a "want" (e.g., a new designer sweatshirt). Keep a journal of what you bought, what you chose not to buy, and what you learned from the experience. Share your thoughts with a partner, and then with the class.

Technology and Globalization

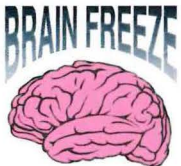
In today's world, technology is a two-edged sword. It offers many solutions, but it can also create difficulties.

In the West, we tend to embrace technological development in all its forms as "progress," often without stopping to think what the results will be. Although technology has brought about many improvements in the quality of our lives, it has also led to many new problems. Neil Postman, in his book *Technopoly*, registers a complaint about technology. He argues that the explosion of communication devices in recent years has led to a form of "information overload." This overload sometimes paralyzes us so that we cannot distinguish between important and unimportant information.

Another concern about technology is that it is increasing the speed of life, causing more stress and less leisure time. Technological innovations like fax machines, cellular phones, and e-mail are much faster ways of communicating than what was available in the past. But these devices have influenced other areas of our lives as well. The people who use these types of technology for work are expected to do everything faster—and more efficiently. Is this ultimately beneficial or harmful to workers? Is it fair to them?

When we ask whether these expectations of workers in the wired economy are “fair,” we are asking the same question we asked at the opening of this book. “Is it fair?” seems to be a question that simply will not go away.

As we have discussed, technology presents a number of problems for the less-developed countries of the world. Although we may not be aware of it, western technology is not always suited for use in other other areas of the world. For example, in the Philippines, the government developed a program to sell tractors to rice farmers. Tractors were supposed to be cheaper and more efficient than the water buffalo these farmers traditionally used. As it turned out, the new mechanical technology was not as well suited to the situation as the traditional methods. Tractors were cheaper to buy, but much more expensive to maintain. They broke down, and fuel had to be purchased. Even worse, tractors could not be bred to make more tractors, and they could not be eaten as could the water buffalo! Eventually, the initiative failed because the farmers abandoned their tractors and went back to their traditional methods. We make a mistake if we assume that in every case, new technology is the solution to a problem.



Think of developments or changes in different areas of life that turned out not to be improvements. Areas to consider include medicine, agriculture, fishing, entertainment, transportation, and communications.

CASE STUDY**Bill Gates**

As Microsoft aggressively, sometimes ruthlessly, marketed its products, the company grew to become the world's predominant force in computer software, and both the company and its founder's worth grew to mind-boggling proportions. In the early 1990s, founder Bill Gates formed a charitable foundation to direct some of his personal

wealth toward worthy projects. His special interest was in providing computers and software produced by his company to schools in poor regions, and in helping the developing world become connected to the Internet. As late as 1995, in his book *The Road Ahead*, Gates dreamed of a world where everyone would have wallet-sized computers with Microsoft software and be connected to everyone else whenever he or she wished.

To see the work of the foundation first hand, Gates began to travel the globe. Slowly, he realized that a third of the world's people did not even have access to a telephone; a computer would not connect them to anything. He learned that a fifth of the world's people lack such basic necessities as clean water, adequate housing, and primary education. His focus began to change.

In November 2000, Gates shocked the computer industry by claiming in a speech that the world did not need more computers and software, it needed more vaccines, clean water, and housing.

No one has ever earned more money than Bill Gates. It is to his credit that he was able to see in his travels something beyond a marketing opportunity for Microsoft.

Reflections

1. Make a list of the problems you face most often in your daily life. Now try to imagine what it would be like if you lived in one of the world's least developed countries, for example, Haiti. What might your top five problems be? What are the commonalities, if any, between the two lists? In what areas of life do the differences appear between the two lists?
2. Many Canadians believe that in a world with more than six billion people, what

individuals wear, eat, drive, and watch has no significant effect on the poor or on people in other nations. Yet the state of the world is a result of the total of all our individual actions. Reflect on your own possible contribution to global equity or inequity. Suggest actions you could take or changes you could make that would make a difference, however microscopic, to the global situation. To what extent might religious beliefs influence choices?



Activities

1. Using a world map, choose a developing nation and design a poster that says something about that nation. What do you think a major world businessman like Bill Gates of Microsoft would think about the nation you have chosen?
2. Write a letter in which you describe the benefits and drawbacks of technology. Suggest several directions in which you believe technology will develop in the next decade and what some of the effects of those developments might be.

CASE STUDY

Saying No to Globalization

In his 1989 novel, *The Storyteller*, Mario Vargas Llosa wrote about a Peruvian Indian tribe, the Machiguengas. They were known as “the men that walked” because, when faced with danger from the outside world—first from Spanish conquistadors and later the western rubber barons—they retreated farther into the rain forest.

Increasingly, however, running away is not an option. By definition, globalization is everywhere; there are few places to hide. So rather than retreating, some communities remain and resist.

MATTHEW YEOMANS, “UNPLUGGED,” *WIRED*, FEBRUARY 2002

As Matthew Yeomans suggests in his article “Unplugged” in *Wired* magazine, not everyone wants to be connected. We have already noted that some people doubt the ideals of the global economy.

For example, thousands of protesters appear at every meeting of the leaders of the G8 industrialized nations (Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, United States, Russia) to protest what they see as the harmful effects of the globalization of the economy by industrialized nations on poorer countries. Other communities have found different ways to say no to globalization. Achuar and Shuar, two communities in Ecuador, simply have not permitted oil companies to explore for oil on their land. Lalibela, Ethiopia, has become a tourist destination because it is the spiritual centre of the Ethiopian Christian Church. But the

leaders of the church there have fought to limit tourism, despite the economic benefits it might bring to their ancient city.

Another interesting example of saying no comes from Italy where both the Slow Food and the Slow Cities movements began. The Slow Food movement began in 1986 and has spread throughout the European Union. Its goals are to persuade more and more people to eat organically grown food and food that has not been modified genetically. The Slow Cities movement attempts to preserve older buildings and quiet streetscapes from invasion by chain stores, neon signs, and automobile traffic. The Slow Cities movement questions the definition of progress that lies at the heart of globalization: that everyone, everywhere should have access to and use of more goods and services.

**Activity**

Consider these two short lists:

Costs of technology

- loss of jobs
- violence on TV

Benefits of technology

- medical technology helps people live longer
- communications technology allows us to stay in touch better

Reproduce these columns in your notebook and add several items to each. In coming up with these items, think of many spheres of life, such as agriculture, medicine, religion, sports, fishing, entertainment, transportation, and communications. In groups of three or four, compare your lists and then discuss as a class.

Religion and Spiritual Beliefs in the Global Village

What role should religion and spiritual beliefs play in this world we have been calling a global village? What role do they already play? What about religion and globalization? Are there specifically religious insights that will help us to understand technology better and use it more wisely?

Religion and the Human Community

Religious faith and spiritual beliefs bring particular perspectives to the question of the global village. Most religions and spiritual beliefs view life in this world as only part of a bigger story. Many Jews, Christians, and Muslims, for example, live in the expectation that another life follows this one. Thinking long-term gives individual believers a different perspective on the meaning of events during this life. Many believers live this life with hope because of what they anticipate is coming afterward.

All major religions and spiritual beliefs teach love of other human beings. Both the Muslim and Christian faiths, for example, hold that a Creator made all human beings. Believing that all



Fig. 5.13 Coffin Rock. *This Aboriginal burial site (note the coffin that looks like a canoe between the trees and the parts of other coffins sticking out from behind the rock) was painted by Paul Kane, a nineteenth-century artist and explorer in western Canada and the Pacific Northwest. Many traditional Aboriginal peoples believe that for the dead to gain immortality, those who remain must show the spirits or the Great Spirit proper respect and follow special observances. As a gesture of respect, some Aboriginal peoples placed their dead so that they would enjoy a view of nature. Also, possessions placed with the dead were sometimes broken in half to indicate that the spirit of the object travelled with the spirit of the dead.*

people were made by God's creative act ideally should result in greater tolerance for people who speak a different language or have skin of a different colour from one's own. For many believers, in fact, tolerance is not enough. Some believe that if God is the author of racial difference, then we ought to celebrate that difference, not just tolerate it. In this picture, the world becomes a village where people truly care about and for one another, regardless of their differences.

Religions offer much more than moral codes, but they usually include a moral code. Typically, a religious moral code contains such obvious commands as "respect your elders," or such prohibitions as "do not murder." But for anyone thinking about religion in the global village, religions usually offer a picture of justice for the whole human community. In that picture, people's material needs are met and they live next to one another without fear.



CHECKPOINT

Define “contentment.” List several advertisements you have seen recently that are intended to make you less content with what you already have.



Activities

1. Interview a local leader of a faith community to find out how that community teaches its followers they should love and care for one another. Write a 150-word report explaining what you learned.
2. Produce a poster from magazine and newspaper photographs or with your own illustrations that shows people carrying out actions that strengthen the human community.

Religion and Globalization

People who would like to spread market economics to every corner of the globe often appear to think that money is the most important thing there is to life. But many other people, including many religious believers, do not agree. They believe that life has many other dimensions. Humans are religious, social, and psychological beings. We are sexual, musical, artistic, comic, and scientific.

Almost the first duty of a religious believer in any discussion of the global market, then, is to remind others that while money is necessary, it is not all there is to life. Religious persons may also struggle with economists who argue that the only healthy economy is a growing economy. As Fig. 5.14 on page 174 illustrates, the world’s religions teach that happiness means being content with what we have. When economics teaches that happiness means having more and more, conflict is sure to follow.

Do not race after riches, do not risk your life for success, or you will let slip the Heaven within you.

TAOISM (DOW-iz-em). CHUANG TZU 29

Woe is he...who has gathered riches and counted them over, thinking his riches have made him immortal!

ISLAM. QUR'AN 104:1-3

Wealth is most commendable, provided the entire population is wealthy. If, however, a few have inordinate riches while the rest are impoverished, and no fruit or benefit accrues from that wealth, then it is only a liability to its possessor.

BAHA'I FAITH. ABDU'L-BAHA, THE SECRET OF DIVINE CIVILIZATION

Who is wealthy? He who rejoices in his portion.

JUDAISM. ETHICS OF THE FATHERS, TALMUD

The accumulation of wealth is the way to scatter the people, and letting it be scattered among them is the way to collect the people.

CONFUCIANISM. GREAT LEARNING 10.9

Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

CHRISTIANITY. 1 TIMOTHY 6:6-10

Fig. 5.14

Many people in the western world believe that they should be content with what they have. But that does not mean that they expect those who have nothing or very little to be content. Rather, religious persons also have something to say about disparity between rich and poor. In chapter 2 of *My Place in the World* we talked about social justice. For religious believers, social justice implies that everyone's basic needs are met. Micah, a Jewish prophet, directly addressed the question of disparity. Micah pictured the peaceful world that God some day would bring to Israel. He wrote that everyone would "sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees" (Micah 4:4).

Reflections

1. Following are two generalizations from Micah's statement:
(a) *Everyone will be able to participate meaningfully in the economy.* (b) *Everyone will have a basic level of economic security.* Suggest other generalizations that you see as consistent with Micah's picture for the time and place in which he wrote.
2. Today, Micah's vision would probably include water, housing, and education but would not likely include telephones. Suggest reasons why telephones should be included in this list, and suggest reasons why they should not be included.

Many religious believers also see tension between development and the environment. They will not agree to unchecked development if it costs the environment. Christians and Jews, for example, take some instruction on this matter from the book of Genesis, which is in the Jewish Torah and the Christian Old Testament. According to Genesis (see margin), the first people were given the dual task of ruling over the creation (Genesis 1:28) and of caring for the creation (Genesis 2:15). Biblical scholars refer to Genesis 1:28 as the cultural **mandate**. The cultural mandate implies that humans are to make culture: they should farm, dig a well, make a road, write a symphony, build a jet. But human cultural activity—all human making and doing—must occur

God blessed them and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY,
GENESIS 1:28

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY,
GENESIS 2:15

DEFINITION

mandate: entrust to administer

*The earth is a garden
The Lord its gardener
Cherishing all,
none neglected*

SIKHISM,
GURU GRANTH SAHIB

*The earth produced
herbs*

*The herbs cause us
to live*

They cause long life

*They cause us to
be happy*

The good life

*May it prevail with
the air*

May it increase

*May it be straight to
the end*

*Sweet Medicine's earth
is good*

*Sweet Medicine's earth
is completed*

*Sweet Medicine's earth
follows the eternal ways*

*Sweet Medicine's earth is
washed and flows*

CHEYENNE SONG

Rajah Koranya had a king banyan tree called Steadfast, and the shade of its widespread branches was cool and lovely. Its shelter broadened to twelve leagues.... None guarded its fruit, and none hurt another for its fruit. Now there came a man who ate his fill of fruit, broke down a branch, and went his way. Thought the spirit dwelling in that tree, "How amazing, how astonishing it is, that a man should be so evil as to break off a branch of a tree after eating his fill. Suppose the tree were to bear no more fruit." And the tree bore no more fruit.

BUDDHISM, ANGUTTARA NIKAYA III.3608

within the limits imposed by Genesis 2:15. Humans must not destroy the earth in the process of fulfilling the cultural mandate; they are to "dress and keep" it—in other words, take care of the earth and all of creation.

The teaching that humans are to be stewards of the natural world is not unique to the Jewish and Christian scriptures. Although expressed in a variety of ways, stewardship of creation runs as a thread through the world's major religions and spiritual traditions. The natural world points to the existence of God or Supreme or Great Spirit. The heavens, the earth, and all creatures are parts of the creation. Humans are part of the cycle or circle of life, not separate from the natural world, and are responsible for caring for the natural world in which they live. Ideas such as these appear repeatedly in the teachings and scriptures of all major religious and spiritual belief systems.

Reflection

Think about the view that a "healthy" economy always has to grow. In your view, could 0 percent growth be considered healthy? What might happen if economic growth dropped or increased? What might be some problems? What might be some advantages? What specifically religious perspectives relate to this question of healthy economies?

CHECKPOINT

Define "steward" (as used in Genesis 2:15).

Activities

1. We have discussed the view that everything is economic. But economics isn't everything. Make a poster that illustrates the many dimensions of human life, including all those listed on page 173 and any others that you can think of.
2. Suggest reasons that some people read Genesis 1:28 as a mandate to do whatever they like, while others read Genesis 2:15 as a prohibition of any human activity that has a negative impact on the natural environment. Suggest what tensions might arise if one attempts to take both *dominion* and *stewardship* seriously.

Religion and Technology

The sacred books of the major world religions and spiritual traditions were written centuries before the development of the print and broadcast media and modern-day technology. As a result, sacred writings do not refer literally and specifically to modern technology. However, as we noted above, for Jews and Christians the cultural mandate (Genesis 1:28) gives humans a reason to farm, dig wells, write symphonies, build roads, and build jets. This list was not simply drawn out of a hat. The first two items have to do with the most basic needs of life—food and water. The third is meant to reflect that humans are creative beings made by a Creator. The last two items both connect to movement from one place to another. But notice something else: all these items involve technology. Biblical scholars consider Genesis 1:28 a mandate to use human inventiveness to devise those things that would make humans' work easier, food keep longer, injuries heal faster, and so on. If you accept this line of argument, then writing a hymn can be seen as a way to offer praise to the Creator. In fact, the great Lutheran composer Johann Sebastian Bach wrote "ad majorem dei gloriam" ("to the greater glory of god") on the bottom of each of the 300 cantatas he wrote for Christian church worship services. But designing, building, and flying a jet also can be a way of offering what one has to the Creator. Both may be ways to carry out what, according to Genesis, God asked the first humans to do.



Fig. 5.15 Johann Sebastian Bach, 1685–1750

Religious believers and organizations from all religious faiths and spiritual traditions have long used communications technology to spread religious teachings. The first book printed by Johannes Gutenberg (1400–1468) on his newly invented moveable-type printing press was a Bible he published in 1455. Contemporary followers of many faiths use CDs, television, audio and videotape, and the Internet to spread their teachings about right and wrong and to advocate caring for the environment and their fellow beings.

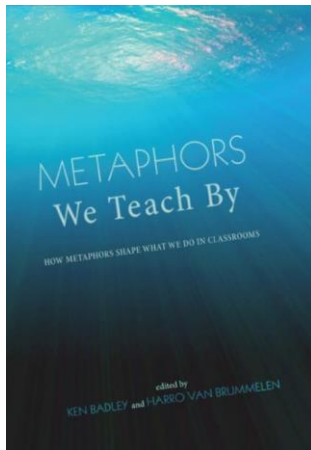


Some critics of technology today use the Internet to spread their message. Consider people today who use the Internet to argue against increasing the use of technology. Are they being consistent? Can they justify their use of the Internet?

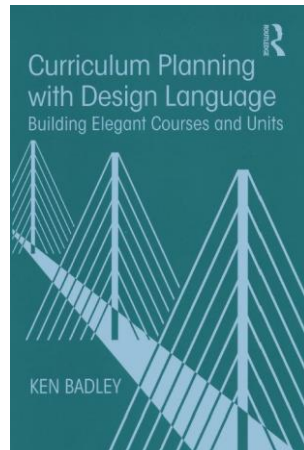
Reflections

1. Make a collage of images on the theme of using technology to spread the teachings of religious faiths and spiritual beliefs.
2. We noted above that Genesis 1:28—the cultural mandate—is often considered a reason for developing technology. Some Christian scholars argue that a single verse of Genesis is not a sufficient argument to defend the use of technology, and that Christians should stand against technological “progress.” Debate this statement in your classroom: “The Bible gives human beings sufficient reason to develop and use technology.”
3. Movements against technology have arisen at various times since the Industrial Revolution (1750–1830). Sometimes these movements have arisen in the name of protecting workers’ jobs or protecting the environment. Carry out research on the Luddites, and write a brief explanation of their reasons for opposing technological development.
4. Some religious movements have rejected technological advance. Research Amish religious communities, and write a brief explanation of these communities’ reasons for opposing technological development.

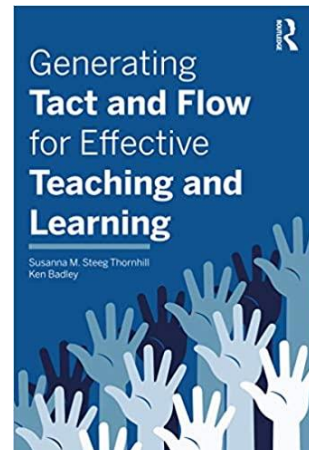
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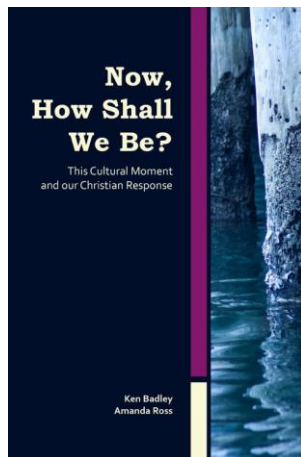
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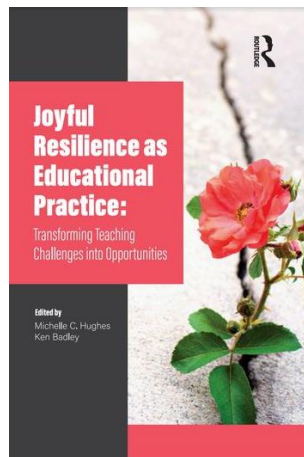
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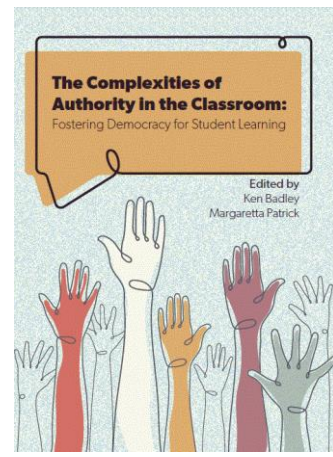
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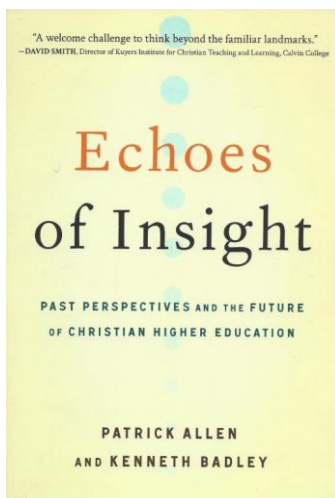


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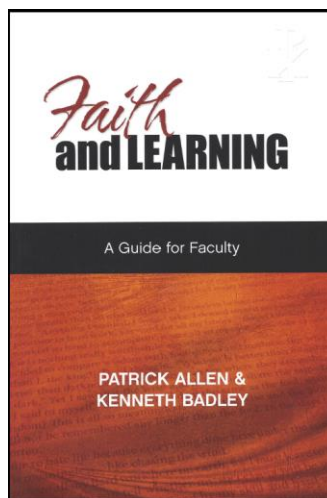


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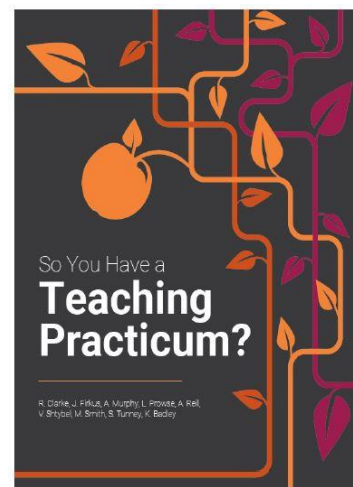


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2017

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