

# **Forces Shaping the 21<sup>st</sup> Century:**

World Views

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This paper has been prepared for internal discussion as part of the START project. It reflects a range of views and it does not represent official positions of the organisations involved.

## Key Messages

- If Auckland (or indeed New Zealand) is to move toward ecological sustainability, a significant and permanent shift in our social values is required in order to make the necessary changes to our society and economy. There needs to be acceptance that there will be significant costs involved in making this transition. However, without this value shift any social and economic changes will be contentious and partial. The possibilities of value shift rest critically on changing our world view to include a greater understanding of ecological and other biophysical systems and of the interconnected nature of the “things” within these systems.
- The greatest threat to New Zealanders and Aucklanders developing or at least changing our world view toward ecological sustainability issues is the consumerism of the baby boom generation. This is the first generation of New Zealanders to have known mass affluence. Their political and economic dominance during the first half of the 21<sup>st</sup> century makes real the possibility that New Zealand’s economic and social resources will be mobilised toward extending their lives and consumption behaviours rather than making the necessary adjustments to allow future generations opportunities for a good quality of life.
- It is unlikely that we will see a collective and comprehensive world view for Auckland. The diversity of interests and identities within the city suggests that we may have a number of contesting world views. This contest may lead to conflict if resources become scarce and this possibility will pose challenges for Auckland’s leadership in the medium term.
- It is difficult to separate Auckland from New Zealand in terms of world views. Our world views will be significantly influenced by a global mass media. While there may be a tendency to homogenise world views – perhaps around westernised or Americanised perspectives, there is probably a greater possibility that world views will become localised around particular influences.
- New Zealand’s future world view may be flavoured by the unique identity of Maori. The extent of influence of things Maori into the mainstream cultural values and practice of non-Maori New Zealanders is unknown. What is known is that a greater proportion of New Zealanders will be able to claim Maori heritage during this century and that New Zealand’s “Maori-ness” gives the country a unique identity in a crowded global market for cultural images and identities. Non-Maori New Zealanders may begin to appropriate or at least adopt Maori cultural images and perhaps values as a representation of their identity..
- At a more local scale Auckland’s “Pacific-ness” will also flavour Aucklanders world view. This influence is however still quite diverse and divided and often caught between the traditional and the modern. It is difficult to say how strong this influence is likely to be.

## 1.0 Introduction

World views are in essence about how we see the world around us – in other words, our perception of reality. This perception is important not only because it defines what is real for us but also because it tends to dictate what we believe is possible. In this way world views, whether they are held by individuals, communities or even whole societies, often tend to limit our perception of possibilities. Individuals who have expanded possibilities have tended to work from a slightly different world view to others. This makes it important to critically examine our own world view and explore how our views are informed. It then becomes possible to consider new and other possibilities within a broader framework.

Our view of the world is mainly determined by our values, our experience, and our identity. As individuals these elements may be represented by our personal value set, our personal and family experiences and self-identity, particularly as it is embedded within the wider society. Within a society or at least a sub-group of a society this world view can be explained by a set of broadly held social and cultural values, the society's history and the group or national identity particularly as it sits within the bigger picture of a national or international context. Several interesting dynamics emerge from such a framework.

Firstly, world views are the result of an ongoing set of social experiences which themselves interact – for example our self identity is conditioned by our cultural values and personal experience.

Secondly, a world view is rarely developed in isolation from other people or other groups – we develop our values base as children, both from our family and community; our experiences are usually shared with others close to us and our identity is given to us as much as it is taken up by us.

Thirdly, world views are normally referenced to a bigger sphere or entity. For example the word “maori” means common and was originally used to refer collectively to the indigenous people of Aotearoa who were at the time more numerous and more common than the less numerous and uncommon European visitors and settlers. The cultural meaning of the word maori has now become a great deal broader on account of subsequent history and context around cultural values.

This paper presents this very complex picture of world views both through our recent history of the past century and in the context of what influence changing world views may have on our future. It also considers the changing and perhaps expanding world views of the past century by tracing shifts in cultural and spiritual positions of New Zealanders and their experiences, particularly the traumatic times, which have shaped the image of ourselves and our place in the world. From this historic base the paper discusses the range of philosophical or conceptual themes which have emerged over the past three decades and that may influence the formation of world views in the future. Finally it speculates on possible future world views and the implications of these for Auckland.

## 2.0 Historical Patterns

### 2.1 Changing Paradigms:

Western world views can largely trace their lineage to the work of 17<sup>th</sup> century scientists and 18<sup>th</sup> century philosophers who laid the foundations of modern day thinking and knowledge systems. This period was a time of radical change within western Europe as the primacy of religion and monarchy were challenged and eventually defeated by a completely new thinking around the use of scientific knowledge to explain our existence and the human condition.

This radical shift in world view commenced with the work of Polish astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543) who explained the heliocentric rotation of the earth around the sun and thus challenged the conventional Catholic Church teaching that the earth was the centre of the universe. Copernicus' work was developed and proven by German astronomer and mathematician Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) and Italian physicist and astronomer Galileo Galilei (1564-1642). Galileo is famously known for his conflict with the Church and his trial and imprisonment for heresy in 1633. Galileo's condemnation is widely seen as the beginning of the ascendancy of rational scientific thought over religious dogma. The scientific revolution started by Copernicus was arguably completed by English scientist Isaac Newton (1642-1727) in 1687 with the publication of *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica*. This treatise set out Newton's laws of mechanics and gravity, which along with the mathematical methods he co founded, formed the basis of western civilisation's view of the physical world for the next 320 years.

A contemporary of Copernicus, the German cleric and theologian Martin Luther (1483-1546), began challenging the apparent corruption of the Catholic Church and hence its moral authority with his publication of 95 *Theses* in 1517. This publication is important in that it was printed on the emerging technology of the printing press and widely distributed throughout Europe. Luther was eventually excommunicated from the Catholic Church in 1521 and by 1531 the Lutheran Church was established as the first protestant church and heralded the start of the Reformation. Protestant theologians such as Frenchman John Calvin (1509-1564) and Scotsman John Knox (1505 -1572) subsequently developed a branch of Protestantism known as Calvinism which it is claimed (by German sociologist Max Weber) provided the moral basis for the Protestant Work Ethic and in turn the cultural values of western capitalism.

In an intellectual sense the Enlightenment was an explosion in both scientific knowledge and philosophical theory. These advances made possible radical changes in political thinking particular with the works of French philosophers Voltaire (1694-1778) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). Voltaire developed ideas around human rights and freedoms particularly around legal rights and religious freedoms. Rousseau's thinking about human nature, the equal moral worth of all people and the rationale for democratic nation states provided something of the philosophical justification for the French Revolution (1789-1799), the abolition (and execution) of the French aristocracy and the founding of the First Republic of France. Although the First Republic was short lived these developments in turn ultimately set the model for the democratic nation state.

The French Revolution set in train widespread political reforms in neighbouring states most notably Great Britain and Germany. These reforms ultimately transferred political power away from the land owning nobility and toward an urban based entrepreneurial class. The moral basis for this shift in power was in some ways provided by Scottish philosophers and political economists Adam Smith (1723-1790) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873). Smith is acknowledged as the father of economics for his major work *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the*

*Wealth of Nations* which was published in 1776 (the same year as James Cook voyaged to New Zealand). In *Wealth of Nations* Smith provides a philosophical justification for free markets and the division of labour and is famously known for his metaphor of the *Invisible Free Hand of the Market*. Building on the earlier work of English philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), John Stuart Mill developed ideas around utilitarianism, which is an ethical position that posits that the maximisation of happiness should be the primary concern of society. Mill in his most famous work *On Liberty* (published in 1859) argues for a minimal role of the state as a means of achieving this maximisation of happiness. Mills' thinking has provided much of the moral basis for modern legal systems through the *harm principle* (that individual rights should only be limited by the harm which these rights may cause to others). This ethical position provides a major foundation both for liberalism and concepts of property rights that have evolved from the liberal tradition.

The Enlightenment extended across most of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and was a revolution in thinking particularly around science and philosophy. The Industrial Revolution, which has variously been dated from 1760 through until 1850, used much of the knowledge and social arrangements generated from the Enlightenment and the preceding scientific revolution to develop technology and build an industrial base which has been likened in importance to the Neolithic explosion of 11,000 BC when humans first developed agriculture. The industrial revolution gained momentum with the development of the steam engine by Scottish engineer James Watt (1748-1832) in 1784. This development in turn catalysed a virtuous circle of technological advances through the 19<sup>th</sup> century with improved coal mining techniques, advances in steel making, the mechanisation of textile production and the development of railways.

## **2.2 New Zealand's Changing World Views:**

The New Zealand of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries can be viewed as a direct product of the scientific and industrial revolutions and the Enlightenment. The cultural values brought to New Zealand by European and mainly British settlers during the half-century following the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi have had a fundamental influence on the nature of New Zealand society even today. These cultural values were the result of an inter-related set of scientific discoveries, philosophical developments and technological advances that ultimately positioned Western Europe and Britain, in particular, as the dominant world power.

These cultural values in particular established a "second world", English speaking society which:

- was overtly Protestant in character although with clear separation between the State and the Church and holding a tolerance of religious diversity;
- was essentially democratic although with self image of egalitarianism ignored the monopolisation of power by a wealthy elite for nearly 100 years;
- emphasised private ownership of property with a residual acceptance of a role for the state where market failure was apparent<sup>1</sup>.

Importantly New Zealand was being established as a British colony in the middle of the industrial revolution and as Britain was emerging as the dominant world power. These features meant in part that New Zealand's colonisation was driven more for social and geopolitical reasons rather than purely economic ones. This in turn meant that there was less direct foreign investment into New Zealand's relatively limited resource base and that

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<sup>1</sup> Note about the pro-property interventions of Vogel, Seddon and Fraser

investment was consequently largely locally determined, although capital was often borrowed from the motherland. The close and ongoing cultural and political links with Britain combined with the ready availability of British technology and the entrepreneurial energy of Pakeha settlers meant that New Zealanders had easy and welcomed access to leading edge technology which was quickly adopted.

New Zealand's isolation from the centres of global power and the isolation of New Zealanders from each other within a thinly populated land has probably left an indelible mark on the Pakeha New Zealand psyche. For example the absence of outside help has contributed to the "No 8 Wire" philosophy. Although this metaphor is probably now more mythical than meaningful, in its time it represented an attitude and self image of New Zealanders as pragmatic and emphatic people who are able to meet most physical challenges. New Zealand's isolation also perhaps gave rise to something of an inward looking and nationalistic culture that up until the 1970's was overtly racist and sexist.

Perhaps like most nation states founded on imperialism and colonisation, New Zealand's "race relations" history is hardly commendable. New Zealand's first settlers were whalers and sealers seeking to exploit natural resources, traders seeking to exploit emerging markets and missionaries seeking to save souls. Missionaries had a profound impact not only on the Maori peoples own world view and on the rationale for British intervention through the Treaty of Waitangi, but on the subsequent colonisation and resource appropriation by Europeans.

By the 1840's, Britain's and indeed Europe's colonial expansions were mature and somewhat tarnished but had developed their own *raison d'être* that appear more reasonable than the mere theft and enslavement that they had been. This justification was based on the idea of bringing civilisation to the world in the form of western ideas, systems and technologies. In New Zealand's case this civilisation included British legal and political systems, British religions and British agricultural systems. The idea of civilizing pagan savages gave rise to ideas such as the "White Man's Burden" and "manifest destiny" which provided white settlers across the newly colonised countries with something of a moral justification for their cultural dominance of indigenous peoples. This moral justification was later provided with something of a pseudo scientific rationale through the work of English philosopher Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) who developed ideas of Social Darwinism<sup>2</sup> during the 1860's. These ideas most likely influenced and reinforced Pakeha settlers' views that they had a moral right and even a moral obligation to appropriate Maori land and other resources. It can be argued that ethnic relationships in New Zealand today and particularly Maori-Pakeha relationships are predicated on the notion of the cultural superiority of the western, and specifically British, world view. While this notion of superiority is being actively challenged and questioned today, the continuing Eurocentric focus of our media and education systems scarcely provide us with the opportunity to fundamentally re-examine our world view.

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<sup>2</sup> Spenser actually developed his ideas of social evolution and the evolutionary development of cultures and societies before Charles Darwin published his *The Origin of Species* in 1859. Spenser is perhaps most influenced by the grim English political economist Thomas Malthus (1766-1834) and his theories around human populations always living on the brink of starvation because of a presumed immorality of the poor. Spenser not Darwin actually coined the phrase "*survival of the fittest*" in his 1864 treatise *Principles of Biology*. Darwin however disputed Spenser's extension of evolutionary theory into societies.

During the entire 19<sup>th</sup> century males outnumbered females mainly on account of dominance of single men amongst those migrating but also on account of lower female life expectancy<sup>3</sup>. Not surprisingly a significant proportion of men (perhaps over half until the early 1900's) never married or even aspired to marry. This feature of 19<sup>th</sup> century life more than any other contributed to the emerging Pakeha New Zealander culture being predominantly a male culture. This male culture has colloquially been described as "rugby, racing and beer" and provided virtually no cultural space for women. There was something of an existential nature to the Pakeha male culture best described by John Mulgan's character Johnson in his 1939 novel *Man Alone*. The image of a stoic, silent, solitary man has been a recurring theme in New Zealand literature and did to a degree provide the template for masculinity for the war generation and the baby boomers.

Women of course did have cultural space within the male culture of Pakeha New Zealanders. This space was trivialised and marginalised by male interests and consequently the role of women was seen as that of bearing and caring for children and otherwise supporting male interests.

The undercurrent of racism and sexism within Pakeha New Zealand's culture began to subside during the 1970's on account of a number of cultural developments which to a degree are still being played out today. The media, education, welfare policy and air travel have contributed to these changes although they appear to hinge around two significant social movements – the rise of feminism and the re-emergence of Maori nationalism.

By the late 1960's women and Maori began attending universities in increasing numbers. This trend was most likely driven by rising affluence and changing expectations of the post-war generation. The late 1960's also coincided with the spread of television and the real time connection of this to the world through emerging satellite based communications. These developments appear to have quickly altered New Zealanders' world view both in terms of a providing a far wider range of people with access to new ideas and by exposing a mass audience to the grievances of previously marginalised groups.

Very little outside of the neo-liberal revolution of Roger Douglas matches the magnitude of the cultural change of the 1970's. The most significant contributions to this change include:

- Protests against the Vietnam War and the subsequent development of foreign policy independent of United States and Australia.
- Introduction of the Domestic Purposes Benefit which with continuing improvements in contraception provided women with greater personal autonomy. This in turn led to a rise in divorce rates, a decline in marriage rates and declines in fertility rates as women exercised this autonomy.
- Maori agitation around land loss, best epitomised by Whina Cooper's Maori Land march of 1974, eventually lead to legislation that provided mechanisms to address these grievances and the historic wrongs of Pakeha governments.
- Emergence of the environmental movement around the Save Lake Manapouri campaign of the late 1960's and birth of the world's first green party in 1972.

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<sup>3</sup> In 1906 the average age at death for New Zealand males was around 42 years while for females it was 40 years. Not until the 1930's did women have the same life expectancy as men and the gap between male and female life expectancy only began to widen during the 1950's.

- Challenges to continued sports contact with apartheid South Africa led eventually to the most significant social unrest of the post-war era with the Springbok Tour protests of 1981. This in turn ultimately undermined the cultural dominance of rugby and led to a re-examination of New Zealand's own racism.
- Pacific migration and the subsequent dawn raids of the late 1970's introduced a third dimension into New Zealand's cultural life and positioned New Zealand as a South Pacific nation.
- Britain's entry into the EEC and the gradual loss of preferential access to British markets for New Zealand farm produce brought about a diversification of economic output and severing of emotional ties with our motherland.

Against these changes the two major changes of the last quarter century pale somewhat. The deregulation and opening up of the New Zealand economy during the late 1980's and Asian migrations of the 1990's have had a profound impact on who New Zealanders and particularly Aucklanders are as a people. The significant shift in New Zealander's world view however probably took place during the 1970's and it is useful to retain some memory of the extent of this change as we consider the scope for changing world views over the next century.

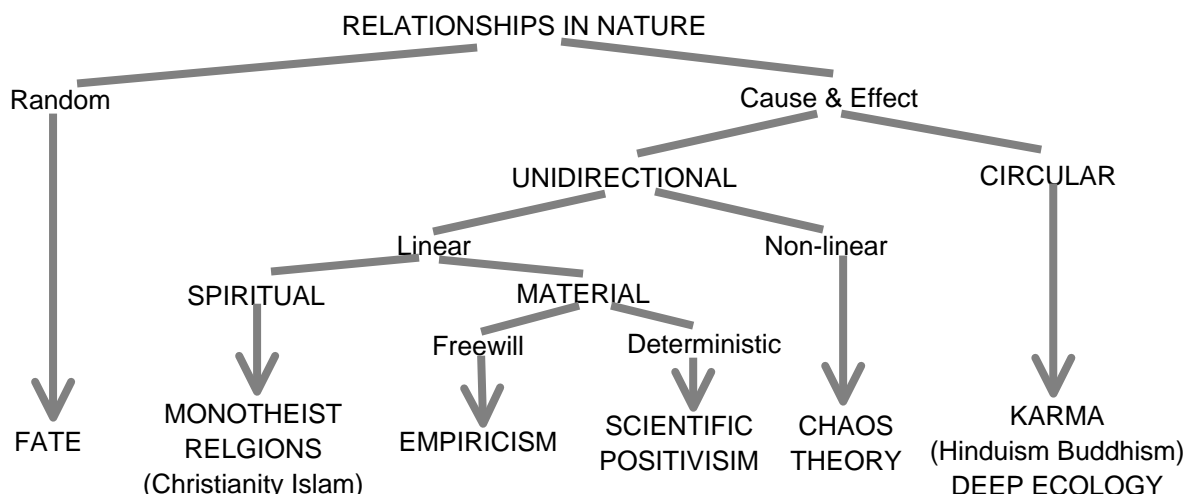
### 3. Key Issues

#### 3.1 Factors Influencing Future World Views

##### 3.1.1 The future of Truth:

Truth is an arguable concept and our concept of it depends critically on our world view. This leads to something of a conundrum in that it is difficult to conceive of other world views without understanding and accepting that other versions of the truth may be equally as valid as our own. While this conundrum is not a philosophical cul-de-sac it does point to the difficulty we will have in contemplating other world views in one hundred years from now.

Consider causality – the relationship between a cause and the effect it produces. We may have a set of beliefs about causality that we apply to the way we see the world. These beliefs are taught to us and are framed within the cultural setting we grow up in. The diagram below provides a simplified overview of the relationship between our belief in causality with the conceptual framework we use to explain reality and to define our truths.



The general acceptance that rational science provides us with the basis of truth is a widespread belief in Western societies including New Zealand. Science attempts to provide a reasoned and evidence based explanation for physical phenomena through a series of well-defined methods. These methods rely on the observation of outcomes from experiments and relating these back to some agreed or widely accepted theoretical basis.

Despite its popularity and orthodoxy, science and the so-called rationality behind it have a questionable historical and philosophical basis. While scientific knowledge continues to grow it appears to be dealing with increasing complexity through further reduction and specialisation. This increasing complexity is the result of deepening knowledge and a growing understanding of the inter-relationship between things. However, the continued pursuit of deeper, more piecemeal and disaggregated knowledge is based most likely on the belief that humans may one day understand the causality of the universe in a reasoned and informed way.

Critics of such blind belief in science point to the almost slavish mimicry of scientific research and to its ideological content that tends to undermine its claim of objectivity and rationality. In his seminal work on the philosophy of science, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), American physicist and philosopher Thomas Kuhn (1922-1996) showed how scientific

knowledge did not progress in an orderly or linear way but through a series of paradigm shifts which he called scientific revolutions. These paradigms are seen as broader (than the science which discovers them) philosophical constructs that determine which types of truths are permissible. Toward the end of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Kuhn somewhat pessimistically concludes that:

*“(w)e may have to relinquish the notion that changes of paradigm carry scientists, and those who learn from them closer and closer to the truth” (p171)*

While the Copernican Revolution of the 16<sup>th</sup> century is probably the most famous scientific revolution, a similar revolution took place at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the work of German physicists Max Planck (1858-1947) and Albert Einstein (1879-1955) and their discovery of quantum mechanics. Quantum mechanics refutes Newtonian mechanics developed by Isaac Newton in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and theories of electromagnetism developed by Scottish physicist James Clerk Maxwell (1831-1879). The extent of difference here is at the atomic and sub-atomic level and is based on the idea that sub-atomic particles move continuously in relation to each other so that their relationships cannot be defined precisely but according to some calculable probability.

Conceptually quantum mechanics is quite a different way of seeing the world. Newtonian physics and the scientific paradigm developed a series of deterministic natural laws which could generally be observed and replicated through experimentation – except at a then invisible atomic level. The value of deterministic and mathematically based natural laws in physics and chemistry led to attempts by others in the natural and social sciences to develop similar mathematical laws – with little real success<sup>4</sup>. Despite this lack of usefulness and validity, western science and knowledge systems have since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century largely been based on the “truth” that science can explain the universe in a reasoned deductive and deterministic way.

Quantum physics of course refutes the preciseness of deterministic natural laws and gives rise not just to the use of probabilistic relationships to explain natural phenomena but to the idea that everything in nature is in a state of flux and not knowable with great precision. The extent to which such a world view begins to pervade western thinking is not apparent at this stage. While there is always some lead time between cutting edge scientific thinking and mainstream conceptual frameworks based on this thinking, the centenary of Einstein’s discovery of the Theory of Relativity passed in 2005 so it is plausible that we would have seen the shift by now.

The prospect that rational scientific thinking no longer inspires western philosophy may represent the paradigm shift that Kahn has referred to or the shift in discourse as suggested by the French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984). But what does this possible vacuum mean for an emerging world view?

While it is difficult to identify a new basis for world views at least two opposing trends are feasible. One is the disintegration of world views as we move from a modern to a post-modern society. The other prospect is the widespread acceptance either of a non-linear world view based around the uncertainties of chaos theory or a world view based on circular concepts of causality.

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<sup>4</sup> Economists persist with this practice most likely on the presumption that economics is a science

### 3.1.2 Modernism vs post-modernism:

Modernism is the term given to the era of western history beginning in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and lasting at least until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. The core ideas of modernism are the idea of material progress and a unity of world view – everyone believes in progress. Clearly the modernist sentiment has driven New Zealand’s post Treaty development. The idea of material progress was based on the application of scientific knowledge to technology which in turn was directed at exploiting natural resources for the material consumption of a broadly affluent society.

Two fortunate offshoots of modernism were the rise of organisational theories and mass production.

Two compelling and somewhat enduring theories around organisations have assisted in the development of large organisations. In turn these have made possible large scale production and distribution on one hand and the large scale apparatus of the state on the other. American engineer Frederick Taylor (1856-1915) developed theories of industrialised management in his famous text the *Principles of Scientific Management* (1911) which focused on dividing work into tightly specified tasks and targets and matching reward systems. The famous sociologist Max Weber (1864-1920) is not only known for his work relating cultural values to economic development but also for his work on bureaucracies and their need for structure and hierarchy.

American industrialist Henry Ford (1863-1947) pioneered the mass production of cars through the invention of the assembly line, the application of Taylor’s scientific management and by raising wages to compensate for the monotony and demands of this work environment. Henry Ford’s greatest invention was probably unintentional. Ford’s high volume, low unit cost and high wage version of mass production eventually turned his workers into his customers and his mass production was matched by a mass market and mass consumption. This form of industrial organisation has been termed Fordism after its founder and lasted from the 1920’s until the 1980’s.

From the mid 1970’s a gradual but dramatic structural shift began which eventually changed the economic and social framework of western societies. These changes can be characterised by the following table:

	THEN	NOW
Economic policy	<b>KEYNESIANISM</b> The use of fiscal policy to stimulate demand and hence promote economic growth during times of depression and recession	<b>MONETARISM</b> The use of monetary policy and particularly the tight control of money supply to limit inflation and hence provide a stable basis for business investment
Basis of production	<b>FORDISM</b> The use of mass production and provision of well paid secure jobs to create a mass market with mass consumption and rising material affluence	<b>POST-FORDISM</b> The use of flexible specialisation to provide infinite variety into a mass of niche markets.
Economic focus	<b>INDUSTRIALISM</b> The mass production of industrial commodities and consumer goods for domestic consumption and export	<b>POST-INDUSTRIALISM</b> The out-sourcing of industrial production to low wage developing countries and the focus on the production of services and high valued speciality goods

Social framework	MODERNISM	POST-MODERNISM
	A widespread belief in the value of “progress” through the use of technology to improve productivity and material standards of living	A rejection of the idea of absolute truths and validity of grand narratives and the acceptance of difference, diversity and the incompatibility of beliefs and aspirations

This interpretation is quite generalised and somewhat arguable particularly in terms of the inevitability or deterministic nature of the changes suggested. In particular the prospect of a shift in social framework (or what might be seen as a work view of world views) is still unresolved within academia. At one level the prospect of post-modernity is quite problematic in that it is a grand narrative of no grand narratives and so can be seen as being quite self-contradictory.

At another level the appropriation of the post-modernity within the arts and architecture has tended to promote an aesthetic that is vague and relativist – it can mean anything you want it to mean. In terms of a world view which is vague and relevant only to the context of the viewer, post-modernism has little explanatory value and perhaps ultimately no value at all as an emerging world view.

The value of post-modernism may however not lie in its ability to make sense of the world but in its usefulness in exposing the ideological content of modernity and hence in challenging modernism’s previous dominance and validity. The acceptance of difference and diversity and of the competition for legitimacy and relevance is now taken as a matter of fact in a liberal, pluralist and multi-cultural society such as New Zealand. This acceptance has been hard won for marginalised groups and peoples. The true impact of this acceptance in terms of an absence of a unifying or at least dominating world view has not become apparent to us just yet.

### 3.1.3 *To chaos and karma*

Chaos theory is essentially a branch of mathematics that looks to describe the behaviour of non-linear dynamical<sup>5</sup> systems. The behaviour of such systems on the surface appears to be random and chaotic but is subject to complex rules and relationships which if understood is predictable. A key feature of chaotic systems is its dependence on or sensitivity to the initial conditions under which the system started. This is known as the butterfly effect<sup>6</sup>. Chaos theory also suggests that complex systems are subject to recurrence whereby change in a system trend to a pattern. This pattern could be a point, a curve, a manifold or a fractal structure<sup>7</sup> known as attractors within chaos theory.

<sup>5</sup> Dynamical systems are mathematical constructs which allow a three dimensional physical system such as a pendulum or water in a pipe to be described by a number of fixed rules. In the case of non-linear systems these fixed rules are non-linear

<sup>6</sup> More popularly the butterfly effect has been used to describe the apparently chaotic link between unrelated events such as a flapping of a butterfly’s wings in one part of the world leading eventually to a tropical storm somewhere else. Such events may be related by the interconnectedness of non-linear dynamical systems

<sup>7</sup> Manifolds are the representations of complex surfaces by a series of relatively simply shapes. For example a soccer ball is a collection of hexagons. Fractals are patterns that can be repeated at increasing scale such as an ice crystal.

Our awareness of chaotic systems perhaps unsurprisingly came out of work around weather forecasting although other systems such as economics, epidemiology and population growth may also be described by chaos theory.

It is somewhat ironic that with the potential decline in the influence of scientific positivism and its basis of linear determinism, that there may be some hope in a more complex yet still deterministic world view based on chaos theory. To date that hope has not been realised because of the yawning gap between mathematical theory and social reality although there does appear to be scope for the future practical application of chaos theory into such arenas as public policy and business decision-making.

Any potential practical value of chaos theory in terms of informing a future world view rests on the following prospects:

- That life is not linear by nature but best described by complex non-linear patterns that are to a degree still understandable.
- That slight differences in where you start may not influence where you end up in the long-term but will certainly influence the course of your journey
- That discrete, appropriate and timely interventions can have huge long-term impacts if we have sufficient understanding about the dynamics of the system we are working with.

Perhaps the greatest influence that chaos theory may have on an emerging world view is the potential it offers to build a bottom up world view based on complex but small scale models rather than from the top down based on aggregated ideas or some grand narrative. For example, our world view of the economy is based on the utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill and their idea that the main purpose of society is to seek to maximise the overall material well-being of the society. Questions of esoteric needs such as spiritual fulfilment and of distribution across and between generations are largely ignored from such a world view. Such a grand narrative is based on assumptions of simplified and simplistic human behaviours where we relentlessly pursue our self-interest however liberally this may be defined. Human nature is of course a great deal more complex than this and the ability to encompass this complexity into a more realistic, more complex but still deterministic world view is an attractive proposition. Chaos theory appears to offer this promise.

Less deterministic are circular views of causality – the idea “that what goes round comes round”. Circular notions of cause and effect as consistent with world views taken by traditional or indigenous societies such as the Maori world view Te Ao Maori. These world views often have a metaphysical or cosmological explanation for the circular relationship between cause and effect – that is that the circularity is the result of a state of nature or the work of the gods. Two streams of circular causality are particularly worth considering because of their potential to influence future world views. These are karma and deep ecology.

Karma is a central concept in both the Hindu and Buddhist religious traditions and is influential in some Christian sects and various secular western philosophies such as New Age. The basis of karma is that actions have consequences for the future by way of some cosmic feedback loop. Hindus see karma as being the work of God and that God determines that the good or evil within our actions are manifest in our futures and perhaps even in a future life. Buddhists on the other hand see karma as the working of cause and effect in which effects (the things that happen to us in our daily life) are experienced as the ripening of previous potentials created by our earlier actions in both this and earlier lives.

Western interpretations or re-interpretations of karma have links to Christian ideas around sin and the idea of a retributive God and on people getting what they deserve and also the notion of reaping what one sows. The more secular interpretations focus on the importance of positive and negative emotional or spiritual energies.

Deep ecology is a recent western philosophical movement that to a degree links New Age spiritualism with ecological thinking. The work of Norwegian philosopher Arne Næss (b. 1912) has been central to the development of deep ecology. The central idea here is that humans have to desist in seeing themselves as separate from nature and begin to conceive of human identity and human societies as being part of and in tune with nature. This change in world view is described as a shift from an anthropocentric paradigm to an ecocentric one. In this context Christian teachings (or at least some Biblical interpretations) have been blamed for the dominant world view that nature is a creation of God which God has provided to humans for their use.

The ecocentric paradigm holds that all living things or at least sentient organisms have equal moral worth and hence equal intrinsic value. Some deep ecologists will even hold that non-living things like rocks have intrinsic value although this is an extreme position.

Deep ecology draws on systems theory and in particular its application to natural processes such as conceptual frameworks around ecosystems, genetics and eco-metabolism. The links are however more invoked than deduced. There is something of a religious fervour around the assumed relationship between metaphysical ideas such as identity and spiritual beliefs and humans' impact on the environment.

The overall idea that it is fundamentally humans' view of their relationship with nature which is the cause of humans' environmental destruction has some intellectual appeal and has struck some resonance within the thinking of liberal Christian theologians. This theological angle appears to be taking two paths. The more conventional path is that of reinterpretation of Biblical scriptures that have previously been interpreted as providing humans with a sacred mandate to exploit natural resources. This reinterpretation has tended to tie in global environmental issues like Third World poverty or climate change to a broader moral campaign around peace and social justice. As well this reinterpretation has invoked the philosophies of the likes of St Augustine and St Francis of Assisi and looked to re-spiritualise nature and invoke the image of God and God's creation in nature. The second path is more radical and is looking at reinterpreting definitions of God to be represented less as an entity and more as generalised presence represented by nature itself – in other words, God is Life and God is nature. This second type of reinterpretation is more aligned to New Age philosophy than to conventional religious doctrines such as those of mainstream Christian churches.

The extent to which Christian churches and other monotheist religions such as Islam and Judaism venture off into this more generalised and somewhat experiential version of God is not known although it seems unlikely at this stage. Given the very broad coverage of ideas encompassed in the New Age terms, it seems unlikely also that this will provide a potential alternative and mainstream framework for peoples' spiritual beliefs within the lives of the current generations. A generalised acceptance that God is nature appears a feasible future prospect for a broadly held world view although the dispute around who or what this God is in detail will most likely remain as a point of contention and perhaps conflict.

### 3.2. The progress of values:

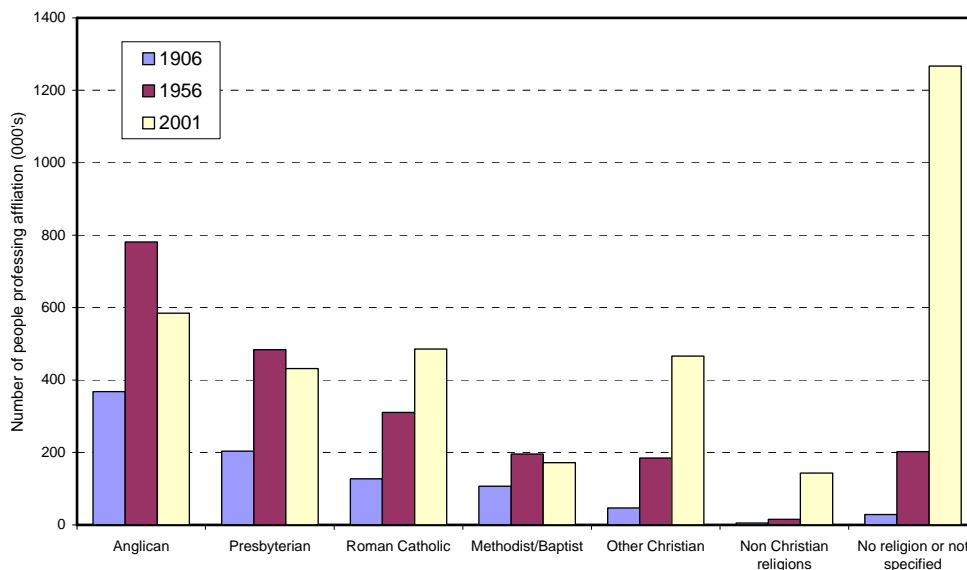
It is difficult to describe the history of values over the last century on account of the absence of reliable indicators of values from these past periods. Some useful indicators such as religious affiliations do exist although other indicators such as marriage rates, out of wedlock birth rates, divorce rates and crimes rates are more problematic because of reasons of social context<sup>8</sup>. Some commentators have tied the changing economic basis of society to ascribe values and if such a perspective has merit there is some value in looking at proxies for values. Such proxies may include occupational structure or levels of urbanisation. These are based on generalised perspectives that city folk think different to country folk or that labourers have a different world view to professionals.

The discussion below canvasses some of the changes in these indicators or proxies over the past century and then speculates on the likely future trends in these over the next century. This speculation will form the basis for the following discussion on the possible progress of values over the next three or four generations.

#### 3.2.1 The question of faith:

The figure below provides a picture of the change in numbers of people affiliating to various religious denominations or different religions or no religion at all. Several features are prominent in the data that are consistent with trends in other western countries as well.

**FIGURE 1: Religious Affiliation 1906-2001**



These trends include:

- The absolute and relative decline of mainstream Protestant churches. This decline is probably more significant culturally than these figures indicate given the huge cultural

<sup>8</sup> For example did the sudden rise in divorce rates in the early 1980's represent a rapid shift in values or simply reflect the opportunity that women had to leave marriages due to the support of the Domestic Purposes Benefit. If there is a causal relationship between the introduction of the DPB and the rapid rise in divorce rates then there was likely to have been a pent up demand for divorces which was realised by the DPB. In other words the value change had occurred well before the introduction of the DPB and perhaps its introduction was a response to this value change.

dominance of the Protestant churches during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries such as around issues like prohibition and support for the monarchy.

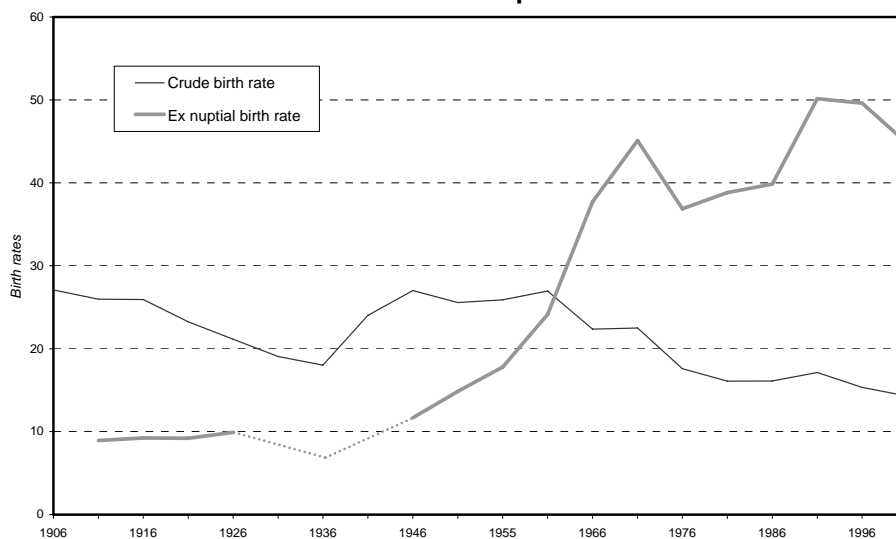
- The huge increase in the numbers of people expressing either no religious affiliation or an antipathy to belief in God. This increase has been most significant since the early 1980's rising from 26% of the population to 44% in 2001. Furthermore since 1956 the absolute numbers of people expressing some belief in God has remained static.
- An absolute and relative increase in the numbers of Roman Catholics which appears in part to be a reflection on higher Catholic birth rates but more importantly on the fact that migrants (especially Samoans) are more likely to be Catholic than any other denomination. There is a real chance that the Catholic Church will become the largest church in New Zealand from the 2006 Census given its relatively stable numbers and the continuing decline of affiliation to the Anglican Church.
- The rise of smaller Christian churches both in absolute and relative terms. This rise perhaps represents an underlying value shift. As the mainstream Protestant churches have become more liberal these smaller Christian churches have built a solid base of followers around more conservative social values. The stability of Catholic church congregations may also be due to its general moral conservatism and the core of support that this retains.
- The rise of non-Christian religions although this rise has been very recent and driven almost entirely by immigration. The number of people professing affiliation to non-Christian religions more than doubled to 143,000 people in 2001. Because of this migrant dynamic it is not surprising that the majority of people following a non-Christian faith live in Auckland. For example in 2001 65% of Muslims and Hindus and 55% of Buddhists lived in Auckland.

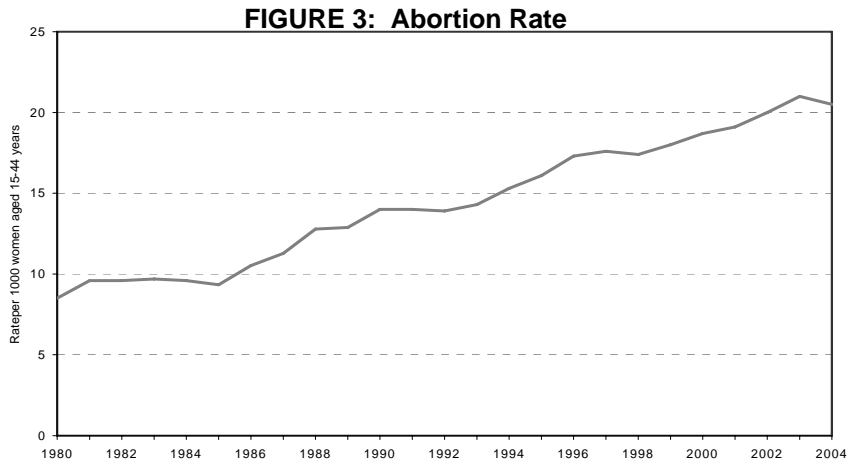
### 3.2.2 The question of family:

Traditional values around family have been fading since the 1960's. This value shift is witnessed through the following socio-demographic changes.

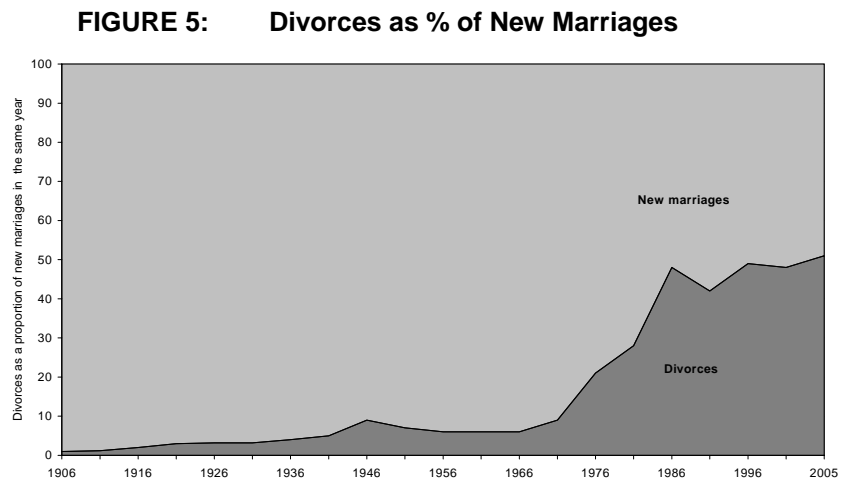
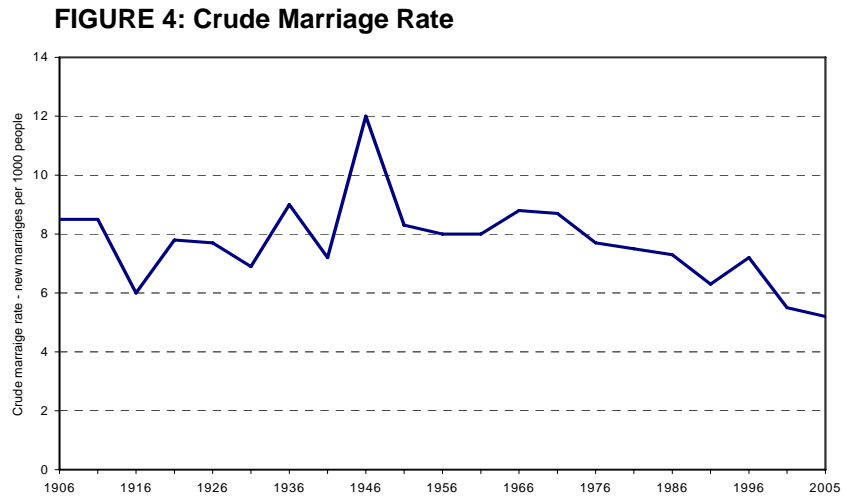
- Falling birth rates and fertility rates and an increase in the rate of ex-nuptial births and abortions.

**FIGURE 2: Crude Birth & Ex-Nuptial Birth rates**



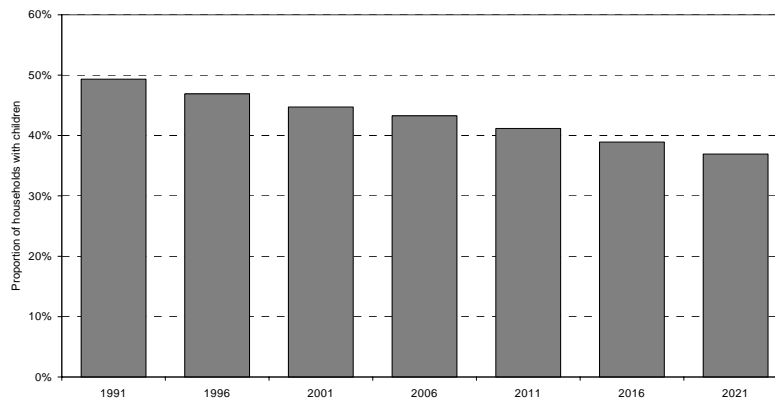


- Declining marriages rates matched by increasing divorce rates



- Declining proportion of households with children.

**FIGURE 6: Proportion of households with Children**



The timing of many of these changes can be seen to match the arrival of reliable contraception, the rise of feminism and the improving status of women in education and the workforce. These changes are no doubt the proximate causes for the changing world view around family in New Zealand and other western societies. It is however difficult to prove if these influences are the fundamental cause for the such changes given that no one thought to ask people and particularly women what they thought about the prevailing family values prior to the 1960's. It may be the case that these changes are less about changing values and more about realised expectations both around the future and the exercise of choice. This prospect is considered in a later discussion on post-scarcity values.

### **3.2.3 The question of identity:**

Self and group identity is ultimately a social concept which is shaped as much by who we believe we are as by who we know we are not. Identity cannot exist therefore without reference to the "other". This "other" starts as our parents and siblings as our self-identity is formed during our socialisation of early infancy and early childhood. As our socialisation extends outwards to the neighbourhood, school and wider community the sense of "other" expands as well and consequently so too does our identification with groups such as our family and peers.

Collective identities are more problematic than self-identity because of the attendant ideological problems around such identifiers as ethnicity, gender, class, age and even sexual orientation and disability. Collective identities have historically been used as an organising metaphor for particular ideologies although the ideological content is often obscured by the metaphor. Such metaphors have included "we are the workers" (Marxism), "we are subjects of the Queen" (Imperialism), "we are all Kiwis" (nationalism) and "we are Presbyterians" (religion). The historical problems with these metaphors is that they have usually been used opportunistically by those in power and have tended to ignore the very real differences in power and position within the ranks around whom the identity is built.

This weakness perhaps inevitably led to the development of so-called "social movements" such as feminism, civil rights for ethnic minorities and post-colonialism. These movements were based somewhat on the politics of difference and tended to build a collective identity around a shared experience of marginalisation although often with a some shared physical feature such as gender or genealogy. The emergence and persistence of these more specific and somewhat exclusive collective identities perhaps fundamentally undermine the prospect that a broader collective identity can be constructed on top of or outside of these more disaggregated collective identities. The classic challenge in this respect is to build a sense of national identity which superficially should not be too hard for a country of four million people.

Valiant attempts are being made by the media to create a national identity out of such things as images (the All Blacks), practices (the haka) and histories (ANZAC Day). The difficulty in forging a cohesive broader national identity is consistent with the post-modern world view that such meta-narratives are no longer plausible.

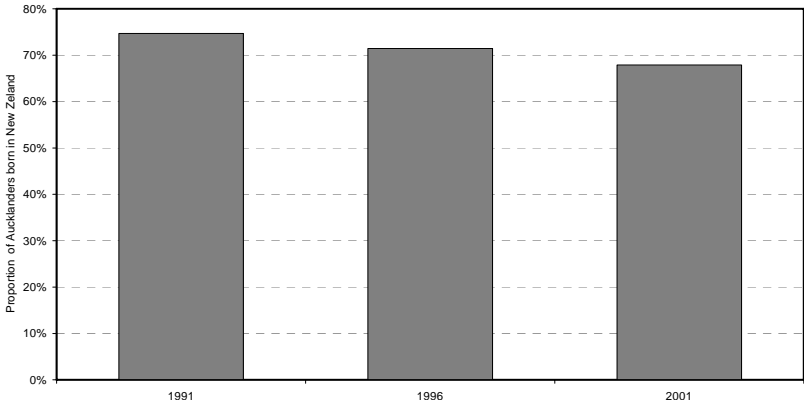
A stronger national identity may ultimately shape or at least contribute to our world view. At present New Zealand's and particularly Auckland's pluralism, (as witnessed both by an expanding multi-culturalism and a relative tolerance to and an emerging celebration of diversity) is perhaps the stumbling block to building such a stronger national identity. There are in fact a number of trends which point do an even broader diffusion of the material on which we can build an identity on and this diffusion is not really being acknowledged for the quite radical way in which it is shifting us from our past.

The New Zealand national identity such as it is, has been built on a characterisation of New Zealanders as Pākehā farmers with a high degree of self-reliance and pragmatic inventiveness. The typical New Zealander today lives in the suburbs of a small or medium sized city and works in an office or shop or warehouse. He or she is urban in their focus and are predominantly middle class in their aspirations. This shift has affected Pakeha as well as Maori. Aucklanders in particularly are now less and less likely to have been born in New Zealand and less and less likely to be Maori or European.

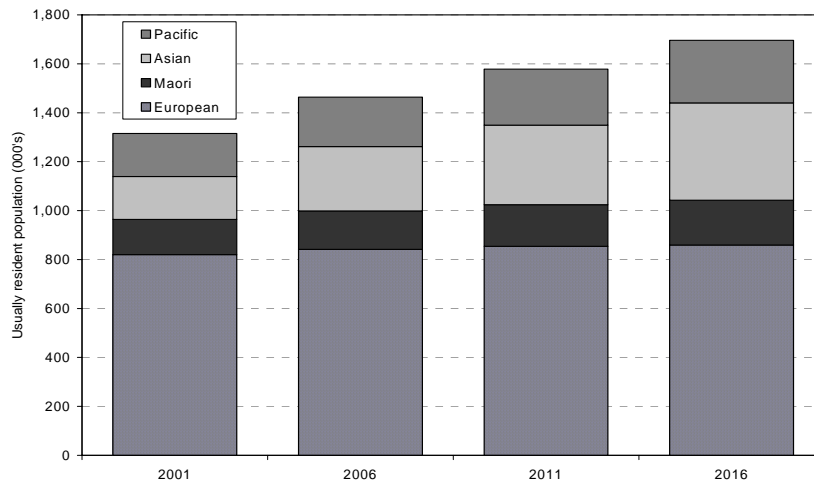
**FIGURE 7: New Zealand's urbanisation**



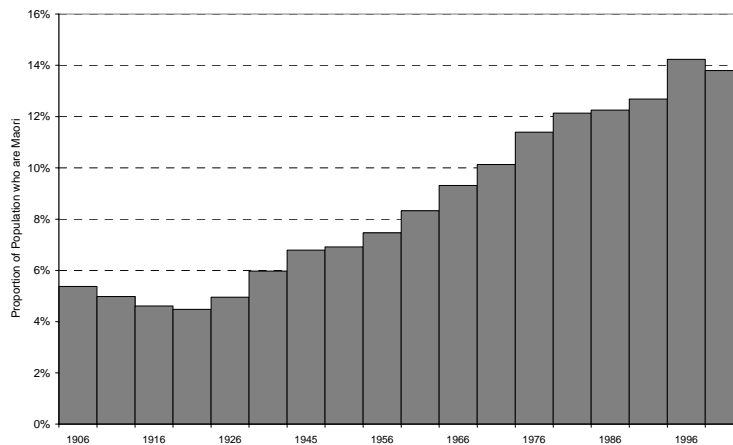
**FIGURE 8: New Zealand born Aucklanders**



**FIGURE 9: Auckland's ethnicity projections**



**FIGURE 10: Expansion of Maori population 1906-2001**



Ethnicity as a basis of identity is becoming more problematic on account of inter-marriage (so to speak) and migration. This is especially so in Auckland where over one-third of residents are migrants. Migrants seldom adopt the identity of their adopted country immediately and with the best will probably retain much of the customs and beliefs of their homeland particularly if the cultural gap between their homeland and New Zealand is wide. As a consequence the world views of Aucklanders are likely to be quite disparate and somewhat different from a broader New Zealand world view if such a thing ever exists.

The complexity for identity forming caused by inter-marriage is well illustrated in the table below, which shows the ethnic identity of Maori mothers and babies born throughout New Zealand during 2004. These results are consistent across preceding years. Interestingly, while 14% of the population identify as Maori (at the 2001 Census at least) twice this number of babies can and most likely will identify as Maori into the future. This result is probably less the result of a slightly higher fertility rate amongst Maori women as amongst European women and more the demonstration that more people are acknowledging their multi-ethnic ancestry and that Maori and European have inter-married freely for several generations.

ETHNICITY	MOTHERS	CHILDREN
Maori only	7,689	6,549
Maori/European	4,551	6,820
Maori/Pacific	465	1,203

Maori/Asian	48	111
Maori/European/Pacific	214	1,149
Maori/European/Asian	61	207
Maori/European/Other	9	54
Maori/Pacific/Asian	10	43
Other combinations including Maori	0	6
Total Maori	13,066	16,255
TOTAL OVERALL	58,073	58,073
% of total who are Maori	22%	28%

While there are some generations to come yet until such a trend would mean that most New Zealanders have Maori heritage, this inter-marriage coupled with the growing cultural confidence of Maori may mean that New Zealand's "Maoriness" contributes more significantly and perhaps predominantly to our national identity over the next three or four generations. This possibility must be seen in sharp contrast to the prevailing view 100 years ago that Maori were a dying race and that it was Pakeha's role to smooth the pillow on their deathbed.

### 3.2.4 The question of changing values:

Since the early 1980's a group of American academics lead by political scientist Ronald Inglehart have undertaken a regular survey of social values that has become known as the World Values Survey. This survey has been subsequently repeated as a longitudinal survey across more than 22 countries mainly within Europe and North America. Surveys have also been conducted in Latin American African and Asian countries on a less regular basis and in New Zealand on at least on occasion.

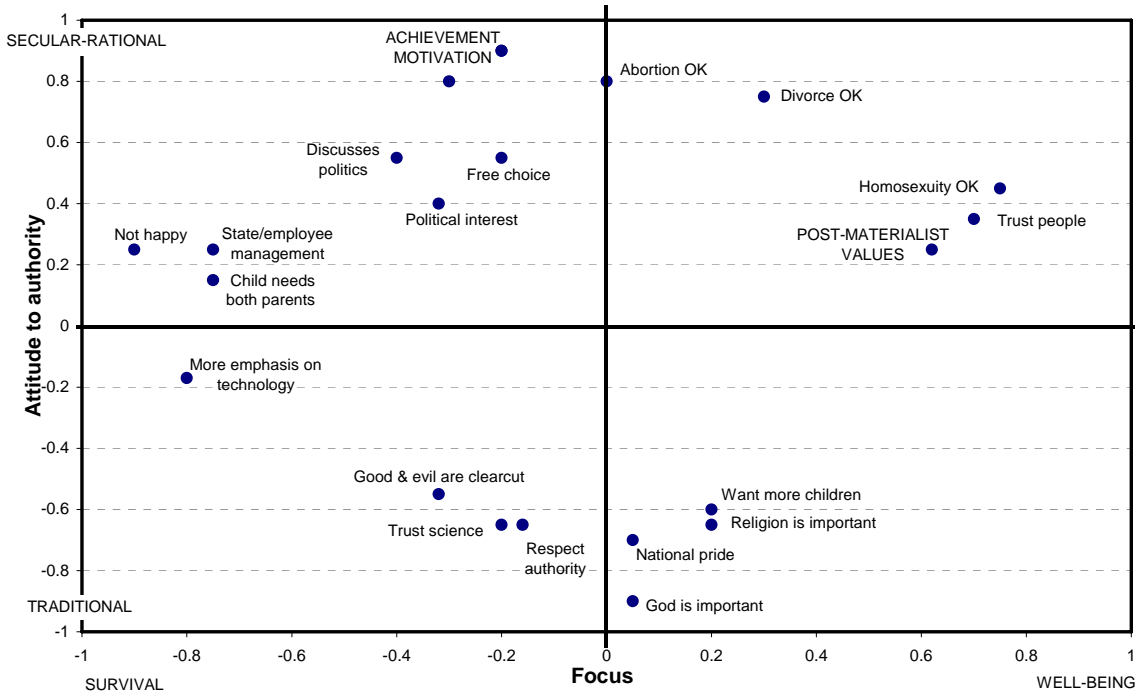
The World Values Survey provides a fascinating picture of changing social values over time and compares social values between countries with vastly different histories, which are in different stages of economic development and which have widely different political systems. The results of the survey have been used extensively by theorists such as Inglehart to explain the relationships between social values and the stage or level of social development of the various countries. While this approach is not unproblematic it provides some useful insights as to how social values change over time and as economic political and social circumstances of the country also change. These insights are useful in any attempt to consider the future of world views.

A famous outcome from the World Values Survey is the *Inglehart Map* which is presented below. This diagram seeks to place value social values or moral positions on a two dimensional scale. The dimensions of this scale are the focus of the society and in particular the degree to which the society is focused on material survival or on more metaphysical forms of well-being. The second dimension is the prevailing attitude to authority and whether the society is traditional in its acceptance of autocratic and perhaps dogmatic systems of authority such as theocracies or autocracies or "secular-rational" where science and technology rather than religion and tradition determine direction and priorities.

The Inglehart Map claims to show a development path for social values from very traditional somewhat conservative values around belief in God, support for authoritarian governments, desire for large families and a clear idea of moral choice to the somewhat technocratic acceptance of the value of technology and the need for hierarchy and order to a liberal

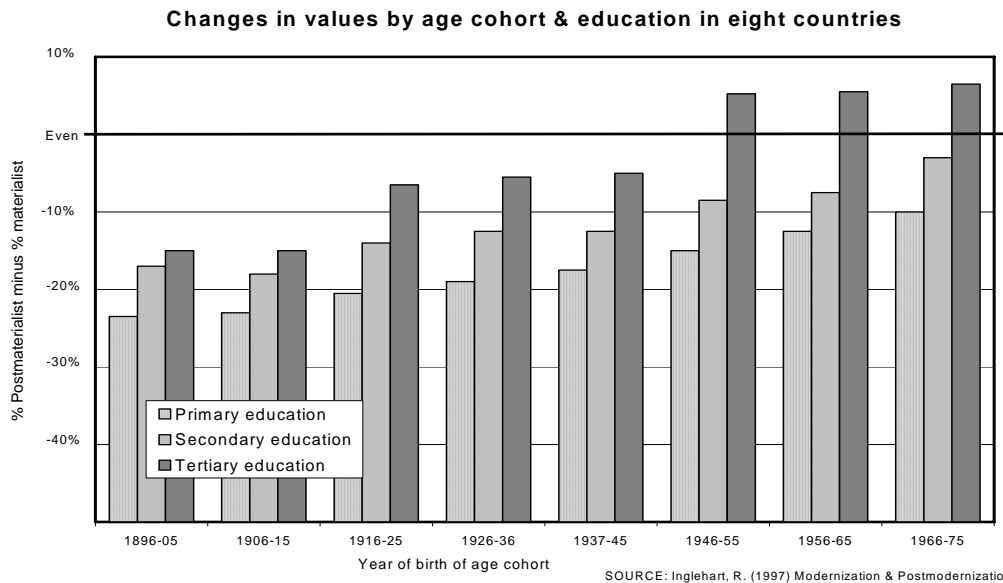
position where there is heavy emphasis on personal freedoms and autonomy and acceptance of a range of liberal moral positions.

### Mapping of values from World Values Survey



Inglehart has defined this last position to “post materialist values” where he argues that as societies move out of an industrial phase to a post industrial phase there is a matching value shift away from materialism to “post materialism” This post materialism is characterised by increased focus on quality of life rather than consumption, on a meaningful existence rather than gaining meaning through work and on developing a spiritual life rather than a strictly secular one. Inglehart distinguished between this post-materialist spiritualism and the tradition forms of God based religions which he claims relied on ignorance insecurity and centralised authority to maintain their legitimacy. Inglehart draws some links between post-materialist values and an increasing desire by people in post-materialist society to care for the environment.

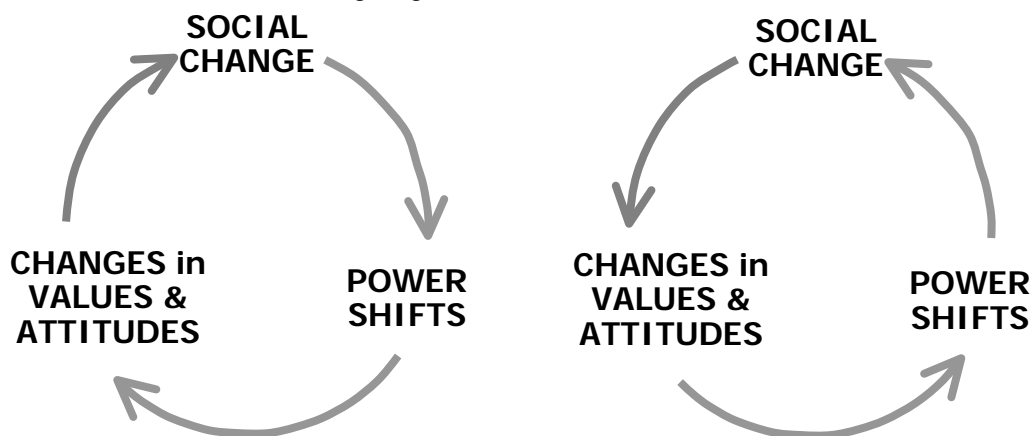
Using the concepts of post-materialist values Inglehart consider the shift in values across age cohorts and educational levels. This shows, perhaps unsurprisingly, the evolution of values from those that are cautious and illiberal amongst the elderly and poorly educated toward more risky and liberal values amongst younger and better-educated people. This survey was undertaken in European countries so would most likely have captured the life experiences of people who had lived through wars and depressions and so known of scarcity and hunger firsthand. The intergenerational shift in values does illustrate the evolutionary nature of values and the association of this evolution to social changes within a country rather than to any cultural basis. In other words values appear to change as the material well-being of a country improves regardless (more or less) of the religious or cultural foundation of that country.



### 3.2.5 The role of social values in social change:

While the rise in feminism may have provided women with greater control over their fertility and their family and work careers it is important to appreciate that these changes occurred at a societal level and on account of attitudinal and perhaps value changes by both women and men. In the same way the renaissance of Maori cultural aspirations and expressions was foreshadowed by emerging Maori nationalism of the 1970's but was eventually underpinned by attitudinal and perhaps value shifts amongst Maori and Pakeha. These attitudinal and value shifts are played out in both electoral politics and every-day social behaviours and over time came to be seen to be the status quo or conventional wisdom.

Social change generally requires a matching shift in power either as a pre-requisite or as an acknowledgement. Social change can drive power shifts for example with acknowledgement of gay and lesbian rights brought about by an increasing acceptance that a range of sexuality should be tolerated within a liberal pluralist society. Conversely power shifts can drive social change such as with the decline of the power of trade unions and the subsequent fall in real incomes for unskilled workers<sup>9</sup>. Whichever way the causality works the stabilising or validating force is the attitudinal or value change that drives or follows the social change and power shift. This can be illustrated in the following diagram.



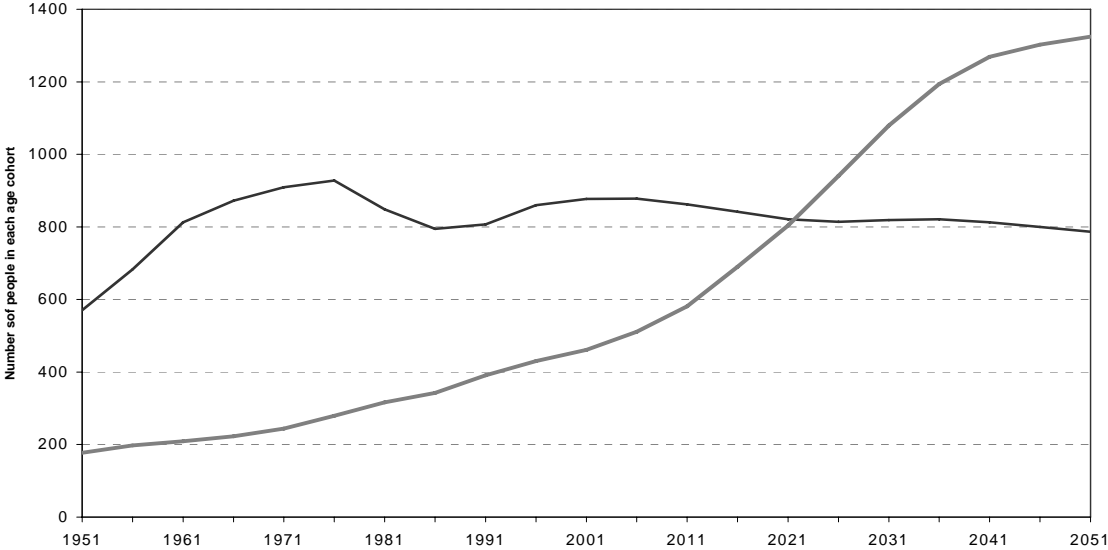
<sup>9</sup> The Social Report 2005 (at [www.msd.govt.nz](http://www.msd.govt.nz)) for a discussion on changing household income distributions from the 1980's.

A key point to take from these diagrams is that the process is continuous and the changing values and attitudes in themselves create the opportunity for further social change and power shifts. A critical issue in this discussion is identifying which influences, be they power shifts or social change, will lead to a subsequent cycle of changes and shifts. In terms of changing world view it is suggested here that the aging of New Zealand society and our responses to risk will be the dominant shapers of our world view over the next two generations or so.

**3.2.6 From longevity to legacy:**

A milestone of sorts is expected to be reached around 2020 if demographic projections prove correct. In this year the number of elderly people (65 years +) exceeds the number of children (under 14 years) for the first time in New Zealand’s history. Over the subsequent 30 years the number of elderly people is expected to increase by a further 62% while the number of children remains static. In 1951 for every 100 children in New Zealand there were just 32 elderly people. By 2051 for every 100 children there will be 168 elderly people – five fold relative increase.

**FIGURE 12: Numbers of children and elderly 1951-2051**



These ratios present the very real prospect that New Zealand (and other western countries) will not only be dominated politically by the interests of an elderly population but that as a society we will become focused on aging and dying rather than creation and renewal. The political dominance of the elderly may mean that a significant share of national resources (public and private) is devoted to extending life and to improving or at least sustaining the quality of life of the frail elderly. It seems unlikely that as a society we will be able to have a rational debate over this resource allocation<sup>10</sup> given both the dominance and immediacy of the claims of the elderly.

In terms of a developing world view, the dominance of the elderly in public life poses two sorts of problems. In the past elderly people have tended to have more conservative and entrenched views which mean that they are less inclined to take risks or to innovate. The

<sup>10</sup> Evidence of this lack of debate can be seen at present with the allocation of over \$2 billion annually to the New Zealand Superannuation Fund while resources to support education and low-income families remain inadequate. Similarly the health system is under continual pressure to fund hi-tech medical interventions particularly to treat cancers at the same time that the oral health of children is in decline.

perspective of the elderly is often shorter-term than for younger people most likely on account of shorter life expectations. Although these are generalisations and may not apply to future generations of elderly, the prospect of an aging society and its impact on the dynamism of a society is an issue of some significance.

The second problem stems from this possible natural retreat to conservative views as we age. This problem is the challenge of ensuring that it does not happen – that the elderly of the next two or three generations become less concerned with their own longevity and more concerned about the legacy they will leave for future generations. This may require a significant mindshift particularly given the consumerism of the generations that will be elderly in 2051. Without such a shift however it is unlikely that we will make the necessary political and institutional changes to meet the challenges posed by climate change and rising energy costs.

### 3.3 Dealing with risk and uncertainty:

The idea of Ron Inglehart and others that our values change as our concerns for survival diminishes has some intuitive appeal. Such a proposition ideally matches the well known and well regarded *Maslow's Hierarchy of Conative Needs* and the suggestion by Abraham Maslow (1908-70) that most humans look to have their lower order needs met before thinking about their higher order ones. Inglehart's concept of "post-scarcity" values can therefore be seen as a societal version of Maslow's Hierarchy.

There is one critical weakness in Inglehart's thesis – the extent to which we are actually entering into a social age where scarcity is not a problem. Inglehart has not figured on global warming, climate change and peak oil and the possible impact that these may have initially on resource availability and subsequently on global stability<sup>11</sup>. If indeed the risk of scarcity emerges for Europeans, Americans and other westerners, the prospect that our grand children will have inherited post-scarcity values may quickly disappear.

This prospect points to our relationship with risk and in particular how we view and respond to risk. There is a rich literature around this topic much of it somewhat self-serving in terms of providing a moral justification for society accepting risks which benefit some but potentially or actually harm others. Several critical questions arise around the topic of societal risk including:

- How as a society do we balance the overall costs and benefits of risk and risk taking?
- How do we balance the interests of potential winners and losers in risk taking?
- Who decides?

Theories of perception of risk appear to be divided between two schools of thought – the so-called *Psychometric Paradigm* of American psychologists Daniel Kahneman (b.1934) and Amos Tversky (1937-1996) and *The Cultural Theory of risk* developed by British

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<sup>11</sup> Inglehart's analysis has a definite western philosophical bias to it particularly in his inference that all societies aspire to western values such as personal autonomy and democratic freedoms. Despite the fact that these values are more limited in practice than they are in theory, there is something of a cultural arrogance in assuming that all cultures aspire to be more western. This arrogance is especially noticeable as we witness the re-emergence of China and India as world powers and with this the prospect that their cultural and intellectual traditions may also influence not only their future paths but also those nations and cultures around them.

anthropologist Mary Douglas (b.1921) and American political scientist Aaron Wildovsky (1930-1993).

The Psychometric Paradigm considers ways in which people assess risk and respond to it psychologically. Various psychological explanations for peoples' risk behaviours are made including the use of adaptive and intuitive learning techniques or *heuristics* whereby people gather information about risk from various sources. They then use this information to assess risk often quite erroneously and quite foolishly on account of such factors as asymmetric information and bounded rationality (we only see what we want to see) .

American psychologist Paul Slovic (b.1938) has contributed to a branch of the Psychometric Paradigm known as cognitive theory that considers how people form ideas about risk. He suggested that people forms views of risk around whether or not the risk is new (say from genetic engineering) or old (ie risk of a drought next summer) to whether science knows about it (risk of lung cancer from smoking) or whether scientific knowledge is lacking (the risk of earthquakes) and according to whether the risk catastrophic or chronic (survivable). He suggests that people bracket risks into two categories "Dread" - risk that is seen as catastrophic, fatal, inequitable and involuntary and "Unknown" – risk which is delayed new and unknown to science. Slovic also suggests that our response to risk is dependant on whether or not we see the affect of the risk as being positive or negative – that is the risk of not winning Lotto after buying a ticket is a great deal more benign than the risk of losing our house to fire because it is not insured. Slovic contends that some risks are stigmatised and regarded so poorly by society that they are seen as morally objectionable and hence the associated risk taking is socially unacceptable regardless of the science or probabilities attached. A recent example of stigmatised risk is the disease risk from passive smoking.

The alternative approach to framing risk is to base risk within a cultural framework. Douglas and Wildavsky's seminal work *Risk and Culture* (1982) provides the basis for this approach and the so-called "Cultural Theory of risk". Douglas and Wildavsky suggest the views of risk are culturally embedded into a society and that these views are both produced by and support social structures. Perhaps the classic example of such a practice is with the use of superstition or spiritual beliefs to explain unknown events, patterns or relationships in nature. Some such as early sociologists like Emile Durkheim and Karl Marx claim that this practice was codified into religious practices and observance as a way of maintaining power over large populations.

Douglas and Wildavsky have developed a typology of risk based on a dichotomy of positions around the limitations placed on people by social constraint (eg. public dress standards applied to women) which they have called "Grid" and the sense of solidarity which people have to a group or broader society which they call "Group". Douglas and Wildavsky's framework is presented in the diagram below.

## GRID

		LOW	Limitations from social constraints	HIGH
<b>G R O U P</b>	LOW	<b>EGALITARIAN</b> Voluntary associations. Focus on low chance-high consequence risk. Fear of catastrophe. The use of fear to gain solidarity		<b>HIERARCHISTIC</b> Reliance on authority & regulation . Fear crime, delinquency and risks which may disrupt the social order
	Sense of belonging or solidarity	<b>INDIVIDUALIST</b> Focuses on competition and the value of markets to allocate. Fearful of anything (eg. war) which will disrupt markets		<b>FATALIST</b> Feeling of a lack of control over most aspects of their lives. Not fearful of risks but hope to survive what ever is about to happen
	HIGH			

If the prospect of climate change and resource scarcity is real then it is quite likely that risk will feature more prominently in our future world view than it may have done over the past few decades. Cognitive theories of risk and the Cultural Theory of risk are useful in considering how this future world view may evolve as individuals and communities begin to deal with the risks associated with climate change and significantly higher energy costs.

Cognitive theories of risk tell us about how we as individuals form our view of risk and do suggest something of a group think to this perception forming. This is not inconsistent with the Cultural Theory of risk and suggests that societal attitudes to risk are formed as much by informed science as they are by personal and collective perceptions, some of which are intuitively or emotionally formed. The key question here is therefore around how society's attitude to and framing of risk change over the next one or two decades as the effects of climate change and implications of peak oil become apparent.

Douglas and Wildavsky's framework is useful as a starting point to this discussion. It can be argued that New Zealanders until the late 1980's accepted a hierarchistic world view at least in relation to risk whereby the State assumed a great deal of risk collectively and on behalf of individuals. In exchange for this assumption of risk, the society created was quite regulated and somewhat stifled although some degree of social mobility suggested that a pecking order was not immovable.

The market liberalisations of the late 1980's and 1990's brought about an individualist focus to risk whereby the government focused on reducing risk to markets through such measures as the Reserve Bank Act (to reduce inflationary risk), the Fiscal Responsibility Act (to reduce the impact of government spending on financial markets) and the State Sector Act (to make State agencies more risk adverse).

It is doubtful that the wider public bought into the individualist/ market liberalisation framework and it can be argued that they have rejected the extremes of this view in elections since 1999. This rejection and the passage of time since the dominance of a hierarchistic approach, suggest that New Zealand is at something of a crossroads in terms of having a world view with some focus on risk. Certainly New Zealanders are more accepting of risk in their personal lives and somewhat resentful of attempts by the State to migrate risk excessively

(eg OSH measures). This risk attitude may however be poorly informed if the excesses of the sharemarket boom/bust of 1987 and the current debt bubble are guides.

If and when New Zealanders begin to face the real risks associated with climate change and energy scarcity it appears possible that we go in one of two directions - into the fatalist camp or to the egalitarian camp. There may not in fact be an unequivocal shift into one camp or the other but a split response. The fatalist approach has no hope and will not bring about the societal changes which are required if New Zealand is to adapt to a future which is significantly different to what we have known. The equalitarian approach has some historic precedent both from the tribal era of Maori history (although a mix of hierarchy and egalitarianism was probably at work) and from the colonial era of Pakeha history where municipal enterprise and civic effort provided essential infrastructure.

The critical policy question here is the degree to which world views especially those around risk can be shaped by public interventions. World views by their nature are extensive and expansive. They generally evolve over the course of a generation although a shock such as a depression, huge natural disaster or war, can rapidly reshape them as well. Creating a positive and creative world view will not only require prescience and creativity on the part of decision makers but also a mandate and broad understanding of the threats and options we face. This in turn requires a frank but optimistic acknowledgement and discussion of the future threats and risks we face.

## **4. Possible Implications for Auckland:**

### **4.1 The impact of globalisation:**

Globalisation will without doubt impact on the world views of Aucklanders and New Zealanders. In particular the ubiquity and reach of information technologies means that New Zealanders' view of the can only become more extensive and more immediate. The prospect that this access and presence implies a generalising or universalising of world views is however questionable and even doubtful given the contrary nature of the future and its habit of veering away from the obvious.

Information technologies and particularly the internet and satellite based communications have to date appeared to be filled with westernised and even Americanised content. This trend has fuelled the perspective that there is a cultural merging as everyone and particularly the young have pursued western or American cultural values and perhaps world views. Such world views may equally be portrayed as being about democratic freedoms or about soulless consumerism and to a degree this is the nub of the current so-called "clash of civilisations" between Islamic fundamentalism and American neo-liberalism.

The real limitations to the generalising influence of IT are the differences between content and information, between information and knowledge and between knowledge and imagination. The ubiquity and falling cost of IT has meant that we are surrounded by the "noise" of the media and have become selective at what we regard and disregard. This selectivity may become more sophisticated in future generations perhaps to the point where groups within a society only tune into certain strands of the vast content of the mass media. These strands may appear disparate to the uninitiated or disinterested but are coherent and

meaningful to those who are tuned in.<sup>12</sup> Such a future appears very post-modern in that there will be a plethora of world views so much so that none are dominant or especially compelling.

The availability and presence of a globalised mass media presents the prospect not only of a wide diversity of world views but that these world views can adapt and develop very quickly on account of the information and ideas available to influence them. This adaptation and development may represent a convergence around certain key values such as core human rights and key issues of ecological wisdom as the plight of others and Earth become apparent through the networks and channels of this media.

#### 4.2 Shifts in Western world views:

Given its history as a British colony and New Zealand's westernised perspective it seems likely that future shifts or trends in western world views will be influential in New Zealand as well. For this reason it is worthwhile to consider possible shifts in western world views. These possible shifts include:

**Declining influence of rationality** – there may be a diminishing belief that science can explain everything and with this a declining acceptance that all aspects of life can be explained by rational thought. This does mean that rationality will be dismissed and that we will descend back into mysticism. Rather the scope for the application of rationality will be limited and with this an acceptance that some things are uncertain or unknowable.

**Re-emergence of spirituality** – perhaps matched with this decline in the entire plausibility of rationality may be an emerging broad acceptance of the spiritual nature of humanity. We may see a growing acceptance of spiritual elements in personal life and perhaps in community life. This spiritual dimension may not necessarily be aligned to an idea of a monotheistic God or religion and may perhaps instead be more aligned to connecting ideas of God into nature. Most likely also there will be a growing acceptance of a diversity of views around spiritual beliefs.

**Changing perceptions of risk** – Rationality and its attendant belief in science has attempted to explain nature in terms of scientific knowledge. This has meant that the uncertainties and risks associated with living with nature have become more knowable and to a degree more manageable. The uncertainty around the future consequences of climate change has not only demonstrated the limitations of science but has placed risk into a sharper perspective. The use of insurance markets to mediate risk may become problematic in part because of the apparent trend of continually increasing weather related losses despite increasing efforts at risk mitigation<sup>13</sup>. Even if a systemic failure of insurance markets does not occur it seems likely that the rising cost of insurance will limit peoples' and whole communities' access to insurance or alternatively that some will be denied insurance over on account of unmitigated and recurrent risk<sup>14</sup>. The prospect that large number of people in the western world live

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<sup>12</sup> A classic example of apparent disparate art forms linking into a cultural movement is with hip hop culture and its key elements of rapping, DJing, breakdancing and graffiti art. The common element to these is that they were practiced by groups of urban marginalised and black youth most likely looking for a counter-culture that expressed their world view.

<sup>13</sup> See for example Evan Mills' recent article "*Insurance in Climate Change*" – Science (vol 309 August 2005) where he suggests that insurance losses from weather related damage have increased at twice the rate of population growth, inflation and insurance penetration combined. Mills reports that the Association of British Insurers claims that weather related losses are rising by 2-4% annually in real terms. Traditionally insurance company payouts have exceeded premiums on a long-term average basis and these losses have been supported by returns from investments – the so-called cash-flow underwriting. Ironically much of these investments are in property that could be subject to the same risks against which the insurance companies are holding them.

<sup>14</sup> This prospect has been offered up by the New Zealand Insurance Council of New Zealand in a recent media statement by its CEO Chris Ryan: see <http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/0,2106,3653962a10,00.html>.

beyond the comfort of insurance markets has significant equity implications which could lead to a variety of behavioural shifts as suggested by Douglas and Wildavsky.

#### **4.3 Prospects of a Kiwi or Auckland World View:**

The likely diversity of interests and identities within New Zealand and particularly within Auckland suggests that a collective world view is not likely to emerge over the next few decades at least. This should come as no surprise given that the dominant world view of New Zealand of the last century was not really shared by Maori and perhaps by women as well. The influence of a globalised mass media would further militate against a unity of views.

Despite this probable diversity of views there may be some unifying strands that provide New Zealanders and Aucklanders with a certain “flavour” in our world views. Aucklanders’ “flavour” will be different from that of rural or small town New Zealanders or of South Islanders on account of the different ethnic identities and lived experiences. Key aspects of the New Zealand flavour may be:

**The dominance of the elderly** – the aging population could quite possibly mean that the interests and values of the elderly will dominate social change processes over the next fifty years although this will diminish after this period. This will most likely be more so out of Auckland on account of the younger population in Auckland.

**New Zealand’s “Maori-ness”** - Maori cultural expressions and values already offer New Zealand a critical point of difference in a world of increasingly homogenised cultural values. Even non-Maori New Zealanders are pleased to acknowledge this uniqueness. There is of course a danger that this may lead to the further appropriation of Maori cultural values and intellectual property and perhaps to the misrepresentation or abuse of these. However, the increasing awareness of Maori cultural practice and an acceptance of this in everyday New Zealand life is in sharp contrast to the attitudes of mainstream Pakeha society 100 years ago and should be acknowledged for the sea change it is. With some luck this awareness and acceptance will translate into a value shift perhaps around such concepts as kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga.

**Auckland’s “Pacific-ness”** - In the same way that “Maori-ness” will flavour New Zealanders’ world view, Auckland’s Pacific-ness may flavour Aucklanders’ world view. The possible depopulation of many Pacific Islands on account of climate change may tend to make Auckland even more unique as the Polynesian City of the world. The actual implications of this in practical terms is rather harder to predict on account of the diversity of Polynesian cultures and the complexity of their interactions with other cultural values within Auckland.

## **5. Our Ability to Respond**

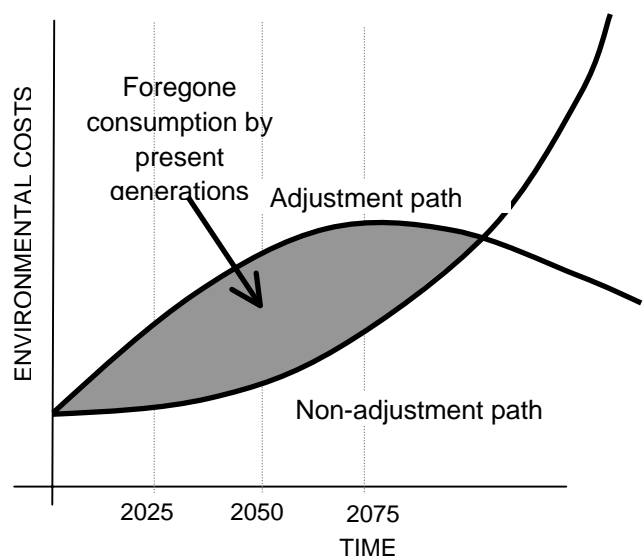
World views whether they are collective or individual do not emerge out of thin air. These views evolve through our experiences. Our experiences are of course shaped by trends and events in the real world. These trends are influenced by governments - by what and how they regulate, by businesses - what they make and sell and by civil society - by how people act and respond. This malleability of world views suggests that views and perceptions can change and most likely will – almost continuously.

The rate and direction of change in world views is perhaps the key question around any quest to make societies and their attendant economies more sustainable. By definition social change is required in order to change society so that it is more sustainable ecologically. To

be effective, this required social change needs to occur at the level of values and attitudes rather than at an institutional or policy level. The main reason for this need for a more fundamental change is that changes which are forced or imposed cannot be maintained or be effective without the acceptance and support of ordinary citizens.

### 5.1 Addressing the values of the Baby Boomers

Gaining the support of ordinary citizens to begin the necessary social and economic changes toward sustainability is especially challenging given the likely political and social dominance of the baby boomers over the next four decades. This demographic cohort has generally inherited a consumerist world view which if maintained into their retirement not only places significant economic pressure on most western societies, but will limit the scope for any adjustment process toward sustainability. There are two aspects to this conundrum. Firstly, there is the need to convince the baby boomer generation to consider the costs and consequences of their actions (and their parents and grandparents) on future generations who they will not know. Secondly, there is the need to forego consumption during the remainder of their lives in order to have resources to make the necessary adjustments to avoid catastrophic environmental change. It seems unlikely for example that the costs and consequences of climate change and resource scarcity will impact as significantly on the baby boomers as they will on their children and grandchildren. Conversely, it seems likely that the costs of adjustment are less for the baby boomers than they will be for the following generations. These effects are shown on the diagram beside.



### 5.2 Adapting existing institutions

It seems unlikely that the shifts toward sustainability will be achieved on the back of radical institutional change. This is not to say that institutional change is not required but rather that institutional change might be seen as a consequence or a product of direct attempts to address sustainability issues. Responses to sustainability challenges may be more about policy and behavioural responses than institutional ones. From such responses institutions from state agencies to firms to NGO's and households will adapt and change as new ground rules and standards become more accepted.

#### *Responding in crises*

Crises offer opportunities for change and adaptation but to make the most of these opportunities we have to be prepared. This preparation requires both an anticipation of the crises and the prospect for an alternative. A classic example is the prospect of increased public transport use as the price of transport fuels rises. While it is important not to allow crises to emerge and grow just for the sake of making a point, there are some crises that need to be played out in order to prompt the necessary behavioural change or values shift. A key response is to promote the opportunities that emerge from crises rather than to focus on failure and look to attribute blame.

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