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**Essay**  
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**Essay criteria selected:**

- ***Environmental problem:*** Sustainable Development
- ***Theories and characters:***
  - Capitalism: Ronald McDonald
  - Gandhian Economics: Mahatma Gandhi

## The Death of a Capitalist Clown: a clash of ideology in the afterlife

**Narrator:** *6:45pm. The sun is setting over a barren landscape that once formed part of the Amazon Rainforest, striped of life to make way for cattle grazing<sup>1</sup>. The landscape resembles a scene from the western front during the first world war, denuded of vegetation and lifeless. The nutrient depleted soils<sup>2</sup> appear almost as a stain on the earth in comparison to the remnant pockets of unspoilt rainforest vegetation. The lungs of the planet are faltering. Meanwhile, in the hedonistic consumer culture of the capitalist first world, millions of Mc consumers are mindlessly devouring McDonalds products. Elsewhere, in a dimmed and quite ward of an American hospital, a doctor is calling the time of death of Ronald McDonald<sup>3</sup>...*

**Gandhi:** *{calmly and reassuringly}* Ah...Good evening Mr McDonald, I am pleased to have the opportunity to meet with you. I had hoped that one day our paths would cross.

**Ronald:** *{startled and disorientated by the sudden appearance of a small, toga clad and bespectacled Indian man}* Where am I? *{pause}* Who are you? *{pause}* What is going on?

**Gandhi:** *{smiles}* Don't be alarmed Mr McDonald. My name is Mahatma Gandhi<sup>4</sup>. It is quite simple really, you have died, and I have been sent by God to guide your first steps of the journey into the afterlife.

**Ronald:** *{hysterical}* Dead! ... NO way! ... I can't be! .... I don't believe you!

**Gandhi:** Calm yourself Mr McDonald. *{pauses}* Take a look around Mr McDonald, what do you see?

**Narrator:** *Ronald recognises a white hospital room, and finds himself looking down upon the lifeless body of a red haired clown. His pasty white complexion was nothing new, but the lifeless eyes and*

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1 "Clearing for cattle pasture" continues to be a major factor causing the deforestation of the Amazon Rainforest: Mongabay (2005) Deforestation in the Amazon: 2004. Available online at: <http://www.mongabay.com/brazil.html> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

2 High rainfall and temperatures within rainforest regions produce highly "weathered and leached soils": Christopherson, R. (2003). Geosystems: An Introduction to Physical Geography. Prentice Hall, New Jersey. p 634.

3 Ronald McDonald is a fictional advertising mascot for McDonalds that was created in 1963. This famous smiling clown is undoubtedly one of the most successful advertising campaigns of the consumer culture: Wikipedia (2005) Ronald McDonald. Available online at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald\\_McDonald](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_McDonald) (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

4 Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) was a Hindu leader who's "philosophy of non-violence... influenced both nationalist and international movements for peaceful change": Wikipedia (2005) Mahatma Gandhi. Available online at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahatma\\_Gandhi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahatma_Gandhi) (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

*mono tonal beep of the cardiogram signalled that something was not quite right. Ronald is shocked as he realises that he is staring at himself. The beaming Mc smile of the bastion of western consumerism for five decades was gone.*

**Ronald:** *{murmurs to himself}* So it's true. I am dead. *{Turns to face Gandhi and utters}* How did I die?

**Gandhi:** Heart attack Mr McDonald ... Ha ha *{chuckling to himself}* I guess your company's products weren't as healthy and nutritious as you claimed they were<sup>5</sup>. You should have listened to Mr Spurlock<sup>6</sup> instead of spending all that money trying to discredit his documentary. But enough idle shatter Mr McDonald, you must now come with me, God is expecting you.

**Ronald:** *{re-assured}* God is expecting me? OK now that's a relief ... I always knew I was doing good things for the world and its people<sup>7</sup>. *{Smug aside to himself}* Although .... I must admit I've always been a little sceptical about the existence of a God. I mean ... I never went to church or anything ... But that doesn't mean I was against Christianity, or any other religion for that matter that didn't limit my freedom<sup>8</sup>. Christianity just didn't appear to have anything to offer me<sup>9</sup>. Oh well ... I guess that doesn't matter now, by the looks of it I have made the right choices in life, and now as my reward God is expecting me.

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5 Despite the majority of nutritionists who argue that the "high fat and low fibre diet promoted by McDonalds is linked to serious diseases", McDonalds claims that the "scientific evidence is not conclusive and that their food can be a valuable part of a balanced diet" : Mc Spotlight (2005) The issues: nutrition. Available online at: <http://www.mcspotlight.org/issues/nutrition/index.html> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

6 Morgan Spurlock was the director of the controversial documentary "Super Size Me" (2004) that demonstrated the health effects of consuming excessive quantities of McDonalds products: Super Size Me (2004) About the movie. Available online at: <http://www.supersizeme.com/home.aspx?page=aboutmovie> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

7 Hooker (1999) outlines that "capitalism as a way of thinking is fundamentally individualistic" with all individuals within society acting in their own self-interests. Through doing so Hooker (1999) argues that "individuals pursuing their own interests will guarantee the interests of society as a whole" Ronald, being a capitalist believes that his pursuit of self-interest has been of benefit to the broader community: Hooker, R. (1999) The European enlightenment glossary: Capitalism. Available online at: <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/GLOSSARY/CAPITAL.HTM> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

8 Ronald's ambivalent perspective on religion is consistent with capitalist ideology. Capitalism.org (2003) states that capitalism is neither supportive nor opposing to a religion providing that it does not "violate the rights of others" : Capitalism.org (2003) Capitalism and religion. Available online at: <http://capitalism.org/faq/religion.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

9 By claiming that Christianity had nothing to offer, Ronald is implying that Christianity did not offer anything to help him achieve his self-interests. Capitalism.org (2003) argues that capitalism "enshrines self-interest" and as such Ronald falsely believes that he is not acting selfishly or in an evil manner as his embracement of capitalism promotes self-interest: Capitalism.org (2003) Capitalism and selfishness. Available online at: <http://capitalism.org/faq/selfishness.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

**Gandhi:** *{sternly}* I wouldn't get too excited just yet Mr McDonald. God needs to review your life and assess whether you have chosen to live in accordance with his plan<sup>10</sup>. Now come along Mr McDonald, we best not keep God waiting, he has a busy schedule. One the way we can discuss the mess that you have left behind here on earth.

**Ronald:** *{indignantly}* Mess? What mess?

**Gandhi:** *{sternly}* The environmental degradation that has resulted from McDonalds blatant disregard for sustainable development<sup>11, 12</sup>.

**Ronald:** *{stares angrily at Gandhi}* Ha... Sorry to disappoint you *Gandhi*, but *you* are mistaken and miss-informed. McDonalds promotes sustainable development!

**Gandhi:** *{quizzing}* Hmm... we will see about that Mr McDonald.

**Narrator:** *Ronald is temporarily distracted as the clouds are pierced by a shaft of sunlight. Gandhi and Ronald ascend into the sky.*

**Ronald:** What a beautiful sunset.

**Gandhi:** Yes – I suppose you could say that Mr McDonald - once you ascend above the tropospheric layer of pollution that shrouds the earth, the sunsets really are quite beautiful<sup>13</sup>.

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10 Central to Christianity is the belief that God has devised a plan as to how each must live. Morris (2004) argues that “The most important thing in life, therefore, is to discover and seek to follow God's great plan for our lives”: Morris, H. (2004) God's plan for your life. Available online at: <http://www.icr.org/bible/godsplan.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

11 The concept underpinning sustainable development is that the needs of the present population are achieved without compromising the needs of future generations: The World Bank Group (2005) Development. Available online at: <http://youthink.worldbank.org/issues/development/> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005). This would involve maintaining a balance between basic human needs with regard to improving the living standards of the present population and the preservation of the natural resources and ecosystems for future generations: The Global Development Research Centre (2005) Sustainable Development Features: Definitions. Available online at: <http://www.gdrc.org/sustdev/definitions.html> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

12 Gandhi is referring to the arguments of the many conservationists that McDonalds promotes “business practices detrimental to the environment” (Mc Spotlight, 2005). Mc Spotlight (2005) argues that McDonalds is indirectly “responsible for the destruction of tropical rainforests” and the production of “a million tonnes of packaging” (Mc Spotlight, 2005). The large scale that McDonalds is promoting these environmentally damaging activities is “contributing to global warming, ozone destruction [and the] depletion of mineral resources”: Mc Spotlight (2005) The issues: environment. Available online at: <http://www.mcsplight.org/issues/environment/index.html> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

**Narrator:** *Ronald is mesmerised by the sunset. Gandhi senses Ronald's reflective mood and seizes the opportunity to reiterate his concern for sustainable development. Gandhi turns to Ronald.*

**Gandhi:** *{sincerely}* Ronald, I want to show you something. Look at that dense forest over there; do you know what that is?

**Ronald:** I don't believe I do...

**Gandhi:** That is the Amazon Rainforest. Now, can you see the vast expanses of cleared rainforest directly to your left?

**Ronald:** *{puzzled}* Yes... what about them?

**Gandhi:** That is where the cattle are grazed for your McDonalds products. Your company continues to promote the clearing of the Amazon Rainforest for the grazing of cattle<sup>14</sup>. Now, you cannot be so ignorant as to believe that this represents "sustainable development" as you so simply stated.

**Ronald:** *{indignantly}* Of course this is sustainable development! Through the utilisation of agroforestry the clearing of this land is sustainable<sup>15</sup>. After the land becomes unsuitable for grazing we allow it to be rehabilitated and then clear another section of rainforest. By continually clearing and rehabilitating the land is managed in a sustainable manner. Therefore McDonalds supports sustainable development.

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13 Pollutants in the troposphere are responsible for "subduing" the sky colours during sunrise and sunsets: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (2002) What dust and pollution don't do. Available online at: [http://www.noaa.gov/questions/question\\_071202.html](http://www.noaa.gov/questions/question_071202.html) (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

14 Gandhi is referring to the argument put forward by Mc Spotlight (2005). Mc Spotlight (2005) argues that while McDonalds has never owned the ranches that were placed on cleared Amazon rainforest, they are still promoting the destruction of rainforest through purchasing cattle from these ranches (Mc Spotlight, 2005). As a result Mc Spotlight (2005) argues that McDonalds should be held accountable for the rampant destruction of the Amazon: Mc Spotlight (2005) McLibel witnesses: Branford, S. Dispossession, Deforestation (Amazon). Available online at: [http://www.mcsplight.org/people/witnesses/environment/branford\\_sue.html](http://www.mcsplight.org/people/witnesses/environment/branford_sue.html) (Last accessed: 28/05/2006).

15 Agroforestry that Ronald refers to is a process that involves rehabilitating and revegetating cleared land "to increase the productivity of degraded forest lands and promote sustainable use of forest resources" (Mongabay, 2005). Mongabay (2005) argues that Agroforestry is a possible solution to "the sustainable economic development of tropical rainforests": Mongabay (2005) Saving rainforests through sustainable development: Agriculture. Available online at: <http://www.mongabay.com/1002.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

**Gandhi:** *{shocked}* I can not believe what I am hearing... This is not sustainable at all...The high density grazing of cattle that is being promoted on this land can not be supported<sup>16</sup>. Can you not see that there is a continual need to clear more rainforest to sustain cattle grazing? How can this form of development possibly be sustainable if the rate of land clearing exceeds the rate of rehabilitation of degraded land<sup>17</sup>? Mr McDonald, I strongly disagree with your view that this use of the Amazon Rainforest is a sustainable practice.

**Ronald:** *{Defensive}* Gandhi that is just popular myth amongst rabid environmentalists. I don't believe for a second that there is conclusive evidence to prove that this land cannot be rehabilitated at a faster rate. And, even if there isn't an immediate solution right now, I believe that technology will be able to solve this problem in the future<sup>18</sup>.

**Narrator:** *Ronald takes another look the destroyed rainforest, and while not convinced of Gandhi's point of view he feels strangely uneasy with his logic. Ronald looks away from the scene of devastation and searches for additional justification for what he has seen.*

**Ronald:** *{re-assured}* Anyway... I am just making an honest living<sup>19</sup>. Consumers want my product, and I am meeting their demands<sup>20</sup>. In a competitive market I need to ensure that my products are cheap

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16 Gandhi is referring to the statement made by Christopherson (2003) that cleared tropical rainforest lands are "quickly exhausted under intensive farming" as a result of "poor soil fertility" that characterise these regions: Christopherson, R. (2003). Geosystems: An Introduction to Physical Geography. Prentice Hall, New Jersey. p 634.

17 Christopherson (2003) argues that "dominant" rainforest trees "require from 100 to 250 years to re-establish themselves after a major disturbance". Gandhi is referring to Christopherson's (2003) argument with respect to unsustainable development of the Amazon Rainforest. As rapidly degraded land is abandoned for a newly cleared land, the rate of rehabilitation of degraded land exceeds the rate clearing of Amazon rainforest: Christopherson, R. (2003). Geosystems: An Introduction to Physical Geography. Prentice Hall, New Jersey. p 634.

18 Ronald is referring to a common assumption that "new technologies can rectify the problems caused by older technologies" and that sustainability problems can be solved through the use of technology: Beder, S. (1996) The Nature of Sustainable Development 2nd Edition, Newham, Australia.: Scribe Publications. p 218. Technology is believed to play a key role in sustainable development as it can push the limits to growth and allow for recycling and reuse of materials: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2004) Technology and sustainable development. Available online at: [http://www.oecd.org/departement/0,2688,en\\_2649\\_34499\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/departement/0,2688,en_2649_34499_1_1_1_1_1,00.html) (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

19 Ronald argument typifies capitalist ideology with respect to profits. Capitalism.org (2003) argues that under capitalism "the pursuit of profit is the moral right to pursue ones happiness" and "there is no such thing as a profit that is too large": Capitalism.org (2003) Capitalism and profit. Available online at: <http://capitalism.org/faq/profit.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005). Therefore as a capitalist, Ronald is acting rationally to pursue profits as it is his "moral right".

20 Ronald does not understand why he is to blame for the problems caused by his company. Richman (2001) argues that consumers are the driving force of capitalism: Richman, S. (2001) Free Markets Aren't Conservative. Available online at: <http://www.fff.org/freedom/0601c.asp> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005). As consumers are demanding fast and affordable food Ronald does not understand why he cannot provide them with this service while increasing his profit intakes.

so I can eliminate the competition<sup>21</sup>. Have you any idea what its like to be in competition with Colonel Sanders?<sup>22</sup> It's not like anyone owns the rainforest, so I don't have to pay anyone or owe anyone anything for clearing it to increase my wealth<sup>23</sup>. *{pause}* Plus through increasing my profit gain by motivating consumers to purchase McDonald's products I am stimulating economic growth, which in turn benefits society<sup>24</sup>.

**Gandhi:** *{frustrated}* Don't owe anyone anything! What about the billions of people in future generations that will rely on that forest for the recycling of carbon dioxide and provide them with oxygen?<sup>25</sup> Or the billions of people who may depend on a new undiscovered medicines that are derived from a species within the rainforest that is being cleared?<sup>26</sup> By promoting the clearing of the Amazon rainforest to graze cattle you are also promoting unsustainable development and are imposing the cost of your short-term profit gains on future generations<sup>27</sup>...

**Ronald:** *{sarcastically}* Ok *Gandhi* if given the chance how would *you* achieve sustainable development.

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21 Capitalism.org (2003) argues that under capitalism "the only force a capitalist can use to put a competitor out of business" is the provision of "better products at lower prices": Capitalism.org (2003) Capitalism and Monopoly. Available online at: <http://capitalism.org/faq/monopolies.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005). As Ronald McDonald is a capitalist and views his pursuit of profits as his "moral right" he must do everything he possibly can to beat the competition.

22 Colonel Sanders was the founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC ®) a major business rivalry of McDonalds: KFC.com (2002) About KFC: Colonel Harland Sanders. Available online at: <http://www.kfc.com/about/colonel.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

23 Capitalism.org (2003) argues that "under capitalism all property is privately owned" including the environment: Capitalism.org (2003) Capitalism and the Environment. Available online at: <http://capitalism.org/faq/environment.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005). As no one owns the Amazon it is therefore "it is valued cheaply in an economic sense" and Ronald knows that if he does not utilise this resource to his advantage, as his competition is, he will loose out to rival businesses. As capitalism allows the use of competition to force rival companies out of business Ronald does not see anything wrong with exploiting the Amazon as a free resource to serve his self-interest of increased profits.

24 The World Bank (2003) argues that economic growth is generally regarded as a "primary vehicle of poverty reduction": The World Bank (2003) Trade reform for economic growth and poverty reduction. Available online at: <http://www1.worldbank.org/devoutreach/july03/article.asp?id=204> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005). As outlined in footnote 6, Ronald being a capitalist believes that he has helped society elevate poverty as his pursuit of his own-self interests has "guaranteed the interests of society as a whole": Hooker, R. (1999) The European enlightenment glossary: Capitalism. Available online at: <http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/GLOSSARY/CAPITAL.HTM> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

25 Raintree (2004) argues that "more than 20% of the worlds oxygen is produced in the Amazon Rainforest": Raintree (2004)Rainforest facts: The disappearing rainforests. Available online at: <http://www.rain-tree.com/facts.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

26 Gandhi is referring to some facts presented by Raintree (2004). Raintree (2005) argues that 25% of "western pharmaceuticals are derived from" tropical rainforests, however only 1% of rainforest plant species have been studied by scientists: Raintree (2004)Rainforest facts: The disappearing rainforests. Available online at: <http://www.rain-tree.com/facts.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

27 Gandhi is referring to Beder's (1996) argument that the price of a good does not incorporate "the cost of [the] environmental damage" caused through the production of that good (Beder, 1996, p 43). Therefore there is a tendency for the costs of production to be imposed on future generations: Beder, S. (1996) The Nature of Sustainable Development 2nd Edition, Newham, Australia.: Scribe Publications. p 43.

**Gandhi:** *{Sincerely}* Capitalism per say doesn't need to be abolished. However it does need serious reconsideration and reform<sup>28</sup>. *{draws a long weary breath and states}* This is at the heart of your problem. Your blind belief in the capitalist paradigm has prohibited you from seeing and truly understanding the root cause of the problems you are only now beginning to see<sup>29</sup>. *{draws another long breath and sighs}* As a result Mr McDonald, you have been unwilling and unable to understand what is required to achieve sustainable development.

*{Takes another look at the devastated rainforest, then looks back at Ronald}* To achieve sustainable development I believe that mass production of goods must be replaced with village based economies that are self reliant and self sufficient<sup>30</sup>. The technology intensive production that capitalism demands must be replaced with labour-intensive means of production<sup>31</sup>. This will result in employment for the poor that will enable them to provide for themselves without having to rely on the whims of first world charity<sup>32</sup>. I also believe that people should only possess the items that one needs in order to survive and nothing more<sup>33</sup>. Those using the earth's resources should ensure that these are managed for the communities benefit rather than their own<sup>34</sup>.

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28 Kesavulu (2004) argues that unlike Marxian socialism which seeks to destroy capitalism, the "Gandhian approach was not to destroy the institution, but reform it": Kesavulu, Y. (2004) Gandhian trusteeship as an instrument of human dignity. *Gandhi Marg*, Vol. 25, Number 4. Available online at: <http://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/trusteeship.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

29 Gandhi is referring to the argument put forward by The Other Economic Summit (1990) that under capitalism people are motivated by "fundamental greed" and that this is considered a positive because it "stimulates economic growth": The Other Economic Summit (1990) *Gandhian Economics: Replacing the economics of scarcity with an economics of abundance*. Available online at: <http://www.ee.upenn.edu/~hunt/Abundance.html> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

30 Gandhi is referring to one of the five key principles to Gandhian Economics. Martin (2001) outlines that "self-reliance and self-sufficiency" (termed *Swadeshi*) is a key principle of the Gandhian economic model: Martin, B. (2001) *Nonviolent Alternatives to Capitalism*. Available online at: <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/01nvc/nvc05.html> (Last Accessed: 28/05/2005).

31 NewCombe (1998) states that Gandhian economics aims to reverse the replacement of labour-intensive production with technology-intensive production within capitalist societies: NewCombe, H. (1998) *Review: Gandhian Economics*. Available online at: <http://www.peacemagazine.org/archive/v14n2p28.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

32 "The basic aim of Gandhian economics is to provide employment for the poor" so that they can work to meet their basic needs without the aid of charity: NewCombe, H. (1998) *Review: Gandhian Economics*. Available online at: <http://www.peacemagazine.org/archive/v14n2p28.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

33 Gandhi is referring to one of the five key principles of Gandhian Economics. Martin (2001) outlines that "Non-possession" is a key principle of the Gandhian economic model: Martin, B. (2001) *Nonviolent Alternatives to Capitalism*. Available online at: <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/01nvc/nvc05.html> (Last Accessed: 28/05/2005).

34 Gandhi is referring to one of the five key principles of Gandhian Economics. Martin (2001) outlines that "Trusteeship" is a key principle of the Gandhian economic model: Martin, B. (2001) *Nonviolent Alternatives to Capitalism*. Available online at: <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/01nvc/nvc05.html> (Last Accessed: 28/05/2005).



**Ronald:** *{Critically}* Hmmm.... They sound like interesting ideas, but without mass production and relying on self-sufficiency, how are you expected to earn a living? You can't possibly expect people to give up their wealth? And to look after the natural resources my company uses would cost me millions of dollars<sup>35</sup>...I don't understand how what you are suggesting could achieve sustainable development.

**Gandhi:** *{frustrated}*

Ronald if you could just try to think outside the capitalist paradigm for a minute I will try to explain... *{draws a long but relaxed breath}* Basically I believe that there is such a thing as too much material wealth<sup>36</sup>, and the consumption of more goods than you need has a negative impact on the broader community<sup>37</sup>. *{pause}* Capitalism serves to meet the luxury needs of some<sup>38</sup>. I believe that the production of luxuries should be minimised so that the equity of income and wealth can be achieved<sup>39</sup>.

By creating villages that are self sustained and self managing, people are forced to be responsive to their impact on the environment<sup>40</sup>. If they degrade the environment then the community will bear the negative effects. Therefore there is an incentive for individuals to ensure that the environment is not degraded as it will impede their ability to produce their basic needs. As such the village will have to find ways to ensure that the production of needs for the present does not limit the needs of the future. *{pauses}* Thus sustainable development is achieved.

**Narrator:** *Ronald stops and thinks about what Gandhi has suggested.*

**Ronald:** *{Critically}* But people are selfish; What is to stop them from trying to cheat the system and produce and consume more than they need? Wouldn't this inevitably lead back to capitalism?

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35 Ronald is still resisting to think outside of the capitalist paradigm that he has embraced all his life.

36 The Other Economic Summit (1990) argues that Gandhian economics acknowledges "principles of limits, the recognition that there is such a thing as material wealth": The Other Economic Summit (1990) Gandhian Economics: Replacing the economics of scarcity with an economics of abundance. Available online at: <http://www.ee.upenn.edu/~hunt/Abundance.html> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

37 The Other Economic Summit (1990) argues that Gandhian economics "recognize that consuming more than enough creates more problems and than it solves": The Other Economic Summit (1990) Gandhian Economics: Replacing the economics of scarcity with an economics of abundance. Available online at: <http://www.ee.upenn.edu/~hunt/Abundance.html> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

38 Gandhi is referring to a statement made by NewCombe (1998) that "capitalism leads to a very skewed distribution of goods and services": NewCombe, H. (1998) Review: Gandhian Economics. Available online at: <http://www.peacemagazine.org/archive/v14n2p28.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

39 NewCombe (1998) outlines that Gandhian economics strives to achieve "income and wealth equalisation": NewCombe, H. (1998) Review: Gandhian Economics. Available online at: <http://www.peacemagazine.org/archive/v14n2p28.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

40 Martin (2001) suggests that in Gandhian economics, by creating villages that are "self sustained and capable of managing" their own "affairs" people become aware of their "wider obligations and connectedness as part if serving something greater": Martin, B. (2001) Nonviolent Alternatives to Capitalism. Available online at: <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/01nvc/nvc05.html> (Last Accessed: 28/05/2005).

**Gandhi:** *{in a calm but stern tone}* No. *{pauses and draws a weary breath}* Because each individual within the village community has an equal status<sup>41</sup> they will be provided with the same amount of income<sup>42</sup>, therefore reducing an individual's ability to have more material wealth than others. I believe that by decreasing the wants of an individual, happiness can be achieved without the need to satisfying infinite wants<sup>43</sup>. After the wants of an individual have been decreased I believe that there would be no need for an individual to have more material wealth than others in order to find happiness. *{pause}* Therefore capitalism is not inevitable.

**Ronald:** *{enlightened}* Hmm... I can see how your ideas are of value to many major global issues, including sustainable development. Do you appose the use of technology?

**Gandhi:** *{cautiously}* No I am not apposed to technology<sup>44</sup>. However I believe it should be used with caution. I believe that technology-intensive and labour-intensive production must be used in an appropriate proportion so that the jobs of the poor are not jeopardised<sup>45</sup>.

**Narrator:** *Ronald is shocked by Gandhi's ideas. It now becomes clear to Ronald that he has not helped the world. Rather he has contributed to the problems associated with capitalism and unsustainable development. Ronald becomes uneasy as he realises how arrogant he was.*

**Ronald:** *{uneasily}* I can't believe I was that ignorant that I did not stop and think about how my actions were affecting others. What you have outlined has fascinated me. I would have never imagined, or even stopped to care about the amount of damage I have caused. *{pauses to reflect on his*

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41 Equality is one of five key principles in Gandhian economics: Martin, B. (2001) Nonviolent Alternatives to Capitalism. Available online at: <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/01nvc/nvc05.html> (Last Accessed: 28/05/2005).

42 Kesavulu (2004) suggests that Gandhian economics embodies a limit on the maximum amount of income an individual is allowed in society, and any differences in income must be "variable from time to time" so the differences in wage are eliminated in the long-term: Gandhi Marg, Vol. 25, Number 4. Available online at: <http://www.mkgandhi.org/articles/trusteeship.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

43 Gandhi perceived happiness as a "ratio between want satisfaction and the number of wants" and that happiness could be increased by either "increasing want satisfaction" through capitalism or "decreasing wants": NewCombe, H. (1998) Review: Gandhian Economics. Available online at: <http://www.peacemagazine.org/archive/v14n2p28.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

44 NewCombe (1998) suggests that Gandhi was "never apposed to technology": NewCombe, H. (1998) Review: Gandhian Economics. Available online at: <http://www.peacemagazine.org/archive/v14n2p28.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

45 Gandhi stressed that a "proper mix of technology-intensive and labour-intensive production should be advocated depending on prevailing conditions": NewCombe, H. (1998) Review: Gandhian Economics. Available online at: <http://www.peacemagazine.org/archive/v14n2p28.htm> (Last accessed: 28/05/2005).

*achievements in life*} Now that I am dead, the material wealth I have accumulated is worth absolutely nothing to me, yet the damage I have caused will negatively affect billions.

**Gandhi:** *{wisely}* It is a pity you didn't make the time to acquaint yourself with my philosophies or listen to the voices of those activists who warned of the dangers of your selfish capitalist ideology and the imperative to embrace sustainable development.

**Ronald:** *{remorseful}* I guess it is too late to say I'm sorry now. I have realised the error of the unethical decisions I have made in life. *{pauses and turns to face Gandhi}* Gandhi while it is too late for me, what could be done to stop capitalism and the unsustainable development it promotes from destroying this world...

**Gandhi:** *{In a dooming tone}* Just pray that one day, the people of earth realise that sustainable development is crucial if life is to persist on here earth... *{pauses, then changes to a cheery tone}* Now follow me Mr McDonald... lets go see God.

**Narrator:**

*Gandhi and Ronald disappear into the clouds, leaving the smoke filled, toxic waste land known as earth behind them. While Gandhi was successful in educating Ronald of the importance of sustainable development, it was too late as the damage had already been done. The fate of the earth now lies within Ronald's successors. With capitalism being a major world paradigm, Ronald stops and wonders what tomorrow will bring to earth.*

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