



A brief look into the sociology of sustainability.

T. Bachelet



A manifesto.

// manifesto : noun

From the Latin manifestus - to manifest, to clearly reveal, to make real. A public declaration of policy and aims.

I have written this book in the form of an informal manifesto, where the values are outlined at the start and the end.

This manifesto aims to inspire those with an interest in climate change (and justice) and bring awareness to the harsh realities for many of us around the world. Although in Dundee, we are not visually affected by climate change yet, it is important to have an awareness of the severe damage others experience.

From all the research I have done, I feel that I understand more about this topic and it puts me in a position to make better actions and change my behaviour in some way that is helpful towards the environment. I have learnt that your community can support and motivate you to take action in an impactful way.

By the end of the manifesto, hopefully the 3 values I will soon outline won't feel as foreign and out of reach as they may at the start.

What I've done as an individual might not make a difference on a global scale but if Dundee as a community made a similar effort, could we change the world?

*Feel free to write, highlight or underline the pages of this book. That's what the wide margins are for! The words in **bold** are those I either learnt during this project or those I think are important, so you'll find them all in the glossary at the end.*

I hope you learn something from this book.

Tiffany Bachelet

Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	5
<i>1. Sociology</i>	8
<i>2. Case study for my building</i>	10
<i>3. The misinterpretation, misuse and exploitation of the word sustainability</i>	14
<i>4. What is Greenwashing?</i>	17
<i>5. Journalism and its role in the representation of sustainability</i>	20
<i>6. Poverty and its role within sustainable behaviour</i>	23
<i>Conclusion</i>	27
<i>Glossary</i>	30

Manifesto Values:

1 - Education

2 - Proactivity

3 - Community

for yourself and those around you

don't assume others will do it

collective participation is powerful

Introduction

Who am I? What does sustainability mean to me and how is my community handling it?

I am currently a 4th year product design student. In my field of work, I hear the word sustainability almost every day. But why have I decided to write a book about this topic? Being eco-friendly is an important aspect of my life and therefore characteristic and personality. It's something I actively take part in throughout my every day life; I buy the majority of my clothes and jewellery second hand, I don't eat meat, I have a reusable water bottle and coffee cup and I try to be as efficient as possible with energy at home. But recently I've had more and more questions about the definition of sustainability. When I found out that black plastic or used pizza boxes couldn't be recycled, I realised that I may have been living blissfully unaware of what it really means and the extent of its implication. I know that I, and many others, must have unknowingly contaminated many, many recycling batches.

I have recently honed in on the topic of recycling. It's something I discovered that I actually have very little understanding about, or in any case, a lot less than I thought.

I live on the 5th floor of a very central flat in Dundee, where there are no recycling bins at the front door, only food waste and landfill bins. For a while, I solved this issue by using the recycling bins of the cafe next door, until one day, I was caught by the (surprisingly) very unhappy owner. At first I was confused as to why this would cause a problem. I'd assumed that the cafe would support a young student doing a good deed for the planet. Unfortunately, I was told that I was not the only person using these bins, and others seemed to use them as convenient landfill bins, which very often contaminated the entire recycling batch. This is an important issue,

as it's the owner of the bins who is liable and will be charged for any contamination. Standard sized bins are 240L, with each individual bin costing around £5.50 to be uplifted, plus a 90 pence rental fee. Both of these amounts are collected weekly, which quietly adds up.

I spoke to Dundee City Council, asking how they could check for contamination and what the consequences were. They assured me that every bin is opened up before collection and checked. If they are contaminated, the owner is then charged to get it uplifted as a general waste bin, which costs £10.96, almost double the original price.

	Weekly uplift cost	Weekly rental cost	Total
Glass	£5.40	£0.90	£6.30
Paper/Cardboard	£5.38	£0.90	£6.28
Plastic/Aluminium	£5.82	£0.90	£6.72
Waste	£10.96	£0.90	£11.86
TOTAL :	£27.56	£3.60	£31.16

This table is for 240L bins in Dundee and does not include food waste, which then adds up to a minimum of £1,620.32 per year.

This particular cafe generates a lot of recycling waste, so the bin can become full very quickly. When the public fills them up, it leaves little room for the rest of the cafe's recycling, which can understandably be very frustrating.

So, with this new insight, what next? Where do I put my recycling? And if myself, an environmentally active student couldn't find a recycling bin near my flat, would the other busy families or students in my building take the time to figure it out? I thought possibly not. How has this become the norm?

According to Huffpost UK, 80% of Brits say they feel exasperated about recycling.

So it's not surprising that in 2018, the UK sent 500,000 tonnes of contaminated recycling to landfill. This is a clear indication that far too many people don't know how or where to put their recycling. Although I am aware this is a two way street, and the public need to do their part in finding out relevant information, I doubt enough is done to promote and educate them about the process.

I've decided to create an informal manifesto, about what I have learnt, what I'm hoping to learn in the process and future, and therefore, what I think is important to teach others. This book will also talk about what sustainability means to my Dundonian society. The words "sustainability" and "society" are commonly used in today's vocabulary. However, they are mostly seen in separate and unrelated issues and I think they should be used to complement each other rather than individually.

Something that I have learnt throughout writing this manifesto, is that working together as a community is a very powerful tool that is far too often overlooked. It truly does enable noticeable differences to be made. By engaging the community, it gives the residents a sense of belonging and ownership towards the co-creation of innovative solutions.

There is a serious lack of comprehension around what the word sustainability actually means; it is readily open to misappropriation for unethical personal gain. So much so, that *The Guardian* has written multiple articles arguing that its definition has become meaningless. The way climate change is presented in the media also has a massive impact on how it is viewed. Big companies are not held accountable enough for their role in our environmental decline. This is largely due to the way they present themselves to the public; misleadingly, and also known as greenwashing. I'll also touch on the role of poverty and how all of these topics are seamlessly intertwined to create the unsustainable society we currently live in.

I hope that by the end of this manifesto, you'll feel empowered to make a difference, no matter how small;

knowing that ***knowledge is the first step.***

1. Sociology

A quick look into the definition and origins of the word sociology.

It seems negligent to have the word sociology in the title without touching base on its origins or how I will be interpreting its definition in this manifesto. This word is often met with confusion and more questions than answers.

It is Auguste Comte, a French philosopher, who established the word sociology. He was born in 1798, just after the French Revolution. Growing up, he identified the advantages and principles that the revolution had created for his society. Through this, he developed the idea that sociology explores how society affects people, but also how people affect society.

C. Wright Mills, an American sociologist, wrote in 1959 one of the most widely read sociology books: *The Sociological Imagination*. He believed that it was knowledge, that could change society for good. He said that:

“Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both.”

What I think is important to hold onto about sociology, is that we make society and society makes us. It is useless to talk about us without the society, and vice versa. It proves the importance of working together as a community.

In this manifesto, I will refer to sociology as the interactions and relationships humans have with each other, especially within smaller communities, such as Dundee.

A great example of a community working successfully together, is the project *Making Sense* that ran for two years between 2015 and 2017. It was an international scheme demonstrating how open-source software, hardware and design can be used effectively by local communities to improve quality of life.

The senior expert of this project, Fabrizio Sestini, speaks of the heavy shift towards participatory approaches to science, technology and environmental degradation in many communities. This collective approach is enabled through the presence of a strong civil sense and responsibility. A similar project was launched in Dundee: GROW observatory. People in and around Dundee came together to create and build soil moisture sensors to collect data and share them with the GROW community. This data is used to help create climate prediction models.

These sorts of projects remind us that we are all stakeholders in our community and like *Making Sense* proved, by working together we can shape our streets, neighbourhoods, cities and countries - and in turn, shape our future.

2. A case study for my building

A basic understanding of what we know, what we don't know, and perhaps what we should know.

I was interested in finding out what sustainability meant to other people in my building, or if they could even just define it. I also wanted to talk to those who had questions about recycling or didn't recycle at all. I wanted to find out why; was it something I could change?

I gave all the flats in my building a small questionnaire to fill out where I asked if and what they recycled. This was to give me a basic understanding of where we all stood. After collating all the results, here are my findings:

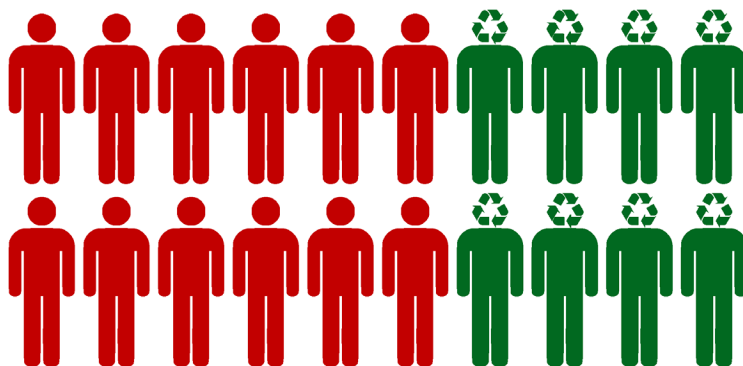
20 people spread out through 6 flats replied to my questionnaire. A shocking 60% do not recycle at all. And of the 40% that did, none of them recycled food waste. This last statistic was the most surprising for me, as there is a food bin right outside our flat door. Although you do have to buy the biodegradable bags, I didn't think it was much more effort. I was very interested in finding out what the reason behind this was.

I spoke individually to two people who didn't recycle at all. Their main reason for this was not knowing where the bins were. After having asked their letting agency for more information about bin collections, they received a very unhelpful email about where the food and landfill bin were (which they knew already), but no information about

recycling. Although they admittedly did not research any further into where they might be, they were quite disappointed that it wasn't easier to access this information.

● Those who do not recycle

♻️ Those who recycle : plastic, cardboard/paper, metal



Visualising the participants of my survey.

An interesting point they made, was about living with four people. They explained that regularly emptying the landfill bin was already a struggle for them and so assumed that any recycling or food waste bins would stay full too long and develop smells.

“I think that some people in our flat might end up being rather lazy and the black bin in itself doesn’t get taken out frequently enough, so if there’s a food bin, it’s just going to end up festering, probably going to end up biodegrading through the bag.”

This made sense to me; the more people in the flat, the more regularly the bins need taken out. A routine or schedule therefore needs to be put in place, which can be difficult to organise in a

busy student flat. They were not the only ones to comment on the smell of the food waste. The 40% who did recycle, all said that the main reason they didn't want to have a food bin was related to the senses. It was described as "disgusting" by 4 people.

From speaking to these two residents, I was also reminded about the importance of visual incentives and reminders to recycle.

Neither of them had seen or heard an advert that had caught my eye on social media and the radio about food waste. This particular advert was successful in that it encouraged my flat mate and I to make sure we put all our food waste in the specific composting bin. It spoke in a colloquial way, explaining that food thrown into landfill bins creates methane, a potent greenhouse gas which feeds climate change. It also claimed that food waste in Scotland which is properly disposed of, can be repurposed into energy. These were both facts I didn't know, and influenced my behaviour and attitude towards food waste. I can say with certainty that this advert pushed my flat to be more aware of our food consumption and try to minimise our waste as much as possible.

One of the residents also told me that he genuinely felt guilt whenever he didn't recycle something. This was from a previous flatmate who had constantly urged him to recycle, and would be vocally upset and disappointed when he didn't. He knows that if they hadn't insisted about this, he would be a lot less vigilant with his waste. This encounter had altered his behaviour.

"Yeah, personally [visual and vocal reminders are] really useful because the more people you see doing recycling or making effort for sustainability the more you feel ashamed."

I then showed them a few facts to see if this would affect their point of view or values towards food waste.

1. *If food waste was a country, it would be the 3rd largest emitter of greenhouse gases (after China and the USA).*

2. *8.4 million people in the UK struggle to afford to eat (the equivalent to the entire population of London).*
3. *250 000 tonnes of the food that goes to waste every year in the UK is still edible.*

After hearing these shocking statistics and facts, they spoke of the appreciation they have for food and that they try not to do big grocery trips. This is done with the aim of minimising how much food they waste. They would both usually buy just enough food to make a meal or two, and simply return to the supermarket more often as it was very close. However, the shutting down of a particular supermarket has affected this routine, as they now need to go further for groceries. This means they now do larger shops so they don't need to go back as often. Both have noticed that it does cause more food to be forgotten and left to spoil. They mention specifically salad and cucumbers being thrown out more than before.

This social experiment showed me that although most people in my building feel quite clueless about how to be eco-friendly, most would be willing to do more if it was made easier, or if they knew their neighbours were also keen. The individuals I have spoken to have agreed to start using their food bin properly and make an effort to minimise their food waste. I hope that this small move will motivate other flats to also try out the food bin and realise that it is easier, odourless and much more straightforward than they thought.

3. The mis-interpretation, misuse and exploitation of the word sustainability

*So what actually is sustainability?
This international buzzword
is everywhere these days and
especially when researching
climate change, yet it is often
misinterpreted, misused and
exploited.*

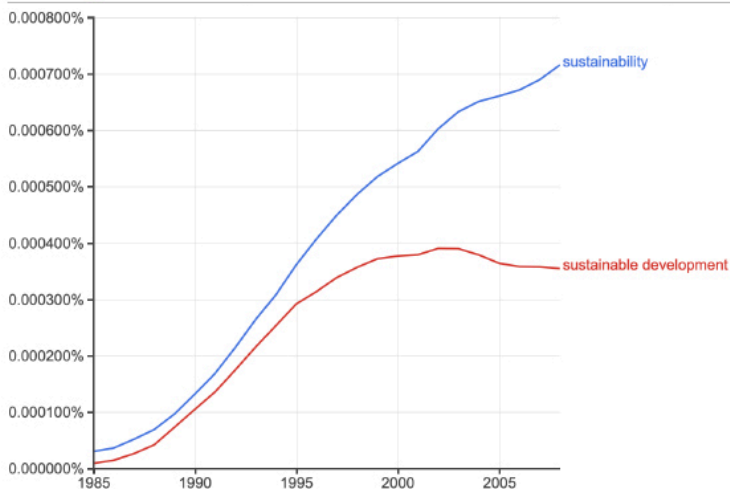
Firstly, it is important to understand and accept that the definition of sustainability has unclear boundaries and is morally ambiguous, depending on how and why you interpret it. However, something that is indisputable, is its inextricable value to our society: it affects our daily lives whether it be consciously or subconsciously.

According to Nicole Detraz, author and professor of Political Science, the word sustainability was first introduced into the general environmental vocabulary in the late 1980's. Its original definition was in German, Nachhaltigkeit, and translates literally to "sustained

yield". This referred specifically to forestry guides, whereby the regeneration rate dictates how much you can harvest in order to not create shortages.

The definition of sustainability used today was certainly defined when UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) was first established in 1972, during a UN conference on the Human Environment. UNEP's newly founded mission was to "provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations." This is almost word for word the modern definition of sustainability and sustainable development by the Brundtland Report.

Google Books Ngram Viewer



Percentage of word use in printed books from 1985 - 2008.

If you look at the roots of the word, *sustinere* is latin for "to hold up", in other words: the ability to sustain or endure. This is very similar to the term resilience; which encompasses the process of both resistance and recovery. Resilience can be defined as the capacity or ability of an ecosystem to absorb disruption without shifting to an alternative state, causing loss of function and services. This is

relevant and an important aspect of the definition of sustainability. The reason I find this interesting is that there is less confusion over the definition of resilience, yet it is so similar to that of sustainability.

This concept of sustainability can be adapted to almost anything. Although there is a hint of utopia in the UNEP mission, it seems as though it would make pragmatic and moral sense to abide by it in our communities and societies. However, many businesses often appropriate the concept of sustainability for their own economical development and gain.

It is important to note that the most frequently quoted definition of “sustainable development” is indeed provided by Brundtland Commission in which it refers specifically to the essential needs of the world’s *poor* and the *environment’s* ability to meet present and future needs.

Brundtland Report sustainable development:

“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

The (sometimes purposeful) ignorance surrounding the term sustainable development and the baggage it carries has often been taken advantage of by businesses. Author of award winning blog site *Take It Personally*, Chantal Bechervaise, explains how some of these businesses and companies who use the word in their marketing, do so as an unethical strategy. This misleads consumers into buying their products and is often referred to as “**greenwashing**”.

This has become such an **ubiquitous** issue that big newspapers like *The Guardian* have frequently argued that the word sustainability should be entirely banned from technical and political discourse. This leads us onto my next chapter, regarding **greenwashing**. What is **greenwashing**?

4. Greenwashing

// noun

Greenwashing is a **pejorative** term used to describe the misleading way in which companies claim that they have a better environmental benefit than they actually do.

As the public is becoming more and more aware of our environmental decline and the impact climate change is having on our planet, **greenwashing** today has a deeper and more complex social impact than it has ever had. It's not a new idea; it's been happening since the 1980's, when companies realised that **greenwashing** helped them gain a more popular image with the public.

The oil company, *Chevron*, was guilty of one of the first examples of **greenwashing**. In the late 1980's, they launched a campaign called "People Do", displaying all the good deeds they were doing for the environment. The advert featured beautiful videos of wild animals with green backdrops and a calming voice over. It was so good, that it actually won an Effie Advertising Award in 1990! Unfortunately, it was not long before people realised that these "good deeds" *Chevron* boasted about, were not out of goodwill, but indeed requirements by law. The extent of the hypocrisy reached a new high when it was discovered they would pay millions of dollars to produce and distribute these adverts, while violating the clean air act, the clean water act and spilling oil into wildlife refuges.

In the past decade there has been a noticeable surge for public behaviour supporting being "eco-friendly". This has been promoted through all media channels and because of digitalisation and social media, the IoT (internet of things, which is described by *Forbes* as a giant network of connected "things" which can also include people) has simply boomed. *Gartner*, an analyst firm, says that there will be

over 26 billion connected devices by 2020.

The increasing presence of social media, online platforms and IoT, means that sometimes behaviours and actions can be seen, copied and multiplied by many. This can be both positive and negative.

A powerful example of this would be the series by David Attenborough, *Blue Planet II*. The BBC announced that it became UK's most watched show of 2017, harnessing a massive 14 million viewers for the first episode of the series.

It has had a massive impact on our cultural shift towards responsible consumption, but this time, specifically around plastic.

“88% of people who saw ‘Blue Planet II’ have now changed their lifestyle”

This is according to the annual Waitrose & Partners Food & Drink Report, based on consumer research of people across Britain, not just Waitrose customers. It focuses on “how mindfulness of our wellbeing and environment are having a huge influence on the way we shop and eat today”.

However, when people discover that some of their “new eco-friendly lifestyles” might actually be supporting lousy agendas that are guilty of **greenwashing**, it has understandably caused an uproar.

According to a new survey conducted by *Accenture*, a multinational professional services company, brands that have sustainability claims on their packaging and who declare that their products can be reused or recycled, have experienced an increased in sales. Many consumers, myself included, are willing to pay more for “sustainable” products.

In April of 2019, a class-action lawsuit was filed against *Nestlé USA*, the largest food and beverage company in the world. They have been using phrases like “sustainably sourced” and “supports farmers” on the labels of their chocolate products. This has deceived consumers into thinking that by buying their produce, they would be

doing a good deed. On top of this, the environmental degradation in the Ivory Coast from their chocolate production is undisputed by Nestlé. Although they have finally admitted that two-thirds of its chocolate supply is tainted with child labor and/or child slave labor, it has been made clear that being environmentally conscious, is not their priority.

However, as surprising as it may seem, they have not had a fall in their sales, in fact, they are doing better now than ever before. Does this have to do with how much coverage (or lack thereof) the lawsuit has had? None of my circle of friends had heard of this lawsuit. The two main newspapers in Dundee are *Evening Telegraph* and *The Courier*, neither of which wrote about this lawsuit. So how are we, as a community supposed to react or know how to deal with this information?

The most common method for **greenwashing** is advertising, heavily influenced by journalism.

5. Journalism and its role in the representation of sustainability

*Journalism has an elemental role within our society, it always has. However, today, its role can be regarded as **dilapidating** with conflicting agendas.*

How do journalists tackle climate change representation?

The effect journalism has to our society is a debated topic, but currently, climate change news coverage is especially significant. Since the media has a direct effect on public opinion, many argue that the lack of representation portrays an inconsequential attitude which can be seen as equivalent to denying it. Not only this, but a large proportion of climate related articles are painted in a negative and dooming light while not actually touching on the science behind it or the possible solutions. This can push the public to feel hopeless, helpless and to disengage.

Polly Curtis is a former UK editor-in-chief of the *Huffington Post* and previously UK director of media at the *Red Cross* and digital editor of *The Guardian*. She is now Editor/Partner at *Tortoise Media* (who tackle the overwhelming information thrown at us every day by providing a slow stream of quality stories rather than a large quantity of shallow breaking news). She argues that digitalisation has had a

massive impact on news coverage. From 2007 to 2017, the number of journalists dropped from 23000 to 17000, and with this, their average pay also suffered massively. Previously, advertising had been the main source of income for journalism. Digitalisation has now almost entirely drained this source of income.

This has impacted the amount and quality of public interest news. Public interest news is a very powerful tool which discusses the portrayal of local and wider communities and their accountability. A lack of this accurate and fair representation can lead to a democratic deficit, in which power is left unchecked and can create disastrous long term consequences. This decline of public interest news through digitalisation can lead to people living in isolated digital bubbles. They may see headlines, but feel no obligation to click any further, read the full article or engage with it.

I've recently heard the term '**un-newsed**', during a talk by Polly Curtis, which explored the future of journalism. She had first come across the term at *Huffpost*, an American news and opinion website blog. It's derived from the term "un-banked"; in an economical way, people who don't have bank accounts are those who are cast out of the economic system and therefore, society. They are unable to have a job or rent a flat etc. Local communities who are lacking the journalists to listen or represent them are called the un-newsed.

Using research done by international news organization *Reuters* and *Ofcom* (UK's Office of Communications), Polly Curtis was able to find out more about the demographic gaps; not just where there is less journalism, but exactly who is and isn't getting access to it. She found that there are huge parts of the UK that don't have meticulous scrutiny methods; very few people are held accountable in these communities.

So, who are the **un-newsed** of the UK? Who is not getting good access to news? And does this affect the meaning of sustainability to these communities?

There is very little evidence about these people, since most research is done through and about those who indeed get access to and read

the news. But when you look to see who is missing, you'll find that they are younger, poorer and less likely to be in work or educated, resulting in a massive class gap in news consumption. This is made further unequal through the digitalisation of the information pool. More and more information is made available now than ever before, but is engaged with less and less. There is so much information it can sometimes be overwhelming and difficult to weave out the authentic and real news.

“Instead of democratising information, there is now a risk that we are exasperating the gaps in democracy in digital journalism.” Polly Curtis

High end newspapers such as *The Times*, have the ability to charge a subscription fee, as their targeted audience is more wealthy. However, this simply widens the “access to information” divide. Although they are getting more money and therefore potentially producing better journalism, it is available to fewer people. These newspapers are becoming exclusive and inaccessible.

What I have learnt from this is that without some form of income that isn't advertising, quality public interest news is unavailable to the masses, and those most affected by this are the younger, poorer and marginalised people in the community. Journalism has a deep impact on our society. If we were better informed about the Nestlé lawsuit or if we had been given information about how to support the morals behind this lawsuit, could we have made a difference?

Coincidentally, according to the humanitarian aid organization *Mercy Corps*, 3 out of 4 people living in poverty rely on agricultural and natural resources to survive. It is not surprising that these people are the ones most affected by climate change.

The groups who are most likely to bear the burden of environmental change while being excluded from its benefits are those in society who face discrimination: those in racial and ethnic minorities, those in lower classes, women and other marginalised groups.

6. Poverty and its role within sustainable behaviour

The Brundtland Report previously mentioned, argues that poverty is a core cause of unsustainable development.

We talked earlier about the poorer, younger and marginalised being those who do not get access to quality journalism. Is it a coincidence that poverty has a role in unsustainable behaviour?

It is not an uncommon belief that poverty actually causes unsustainability. This is reasoned by the concept that people act unsustainably through absence of alternative options.

There is not one single definition for poverty, but they all revolve around lacking the sufficient income to meet basic needs, which can be closely linked to the definition of unsustainability.

Let's talk through a couple of case studies that display this argument.

1. Deforestation:

Mary Robinson, an independent Irish politician and also the first woman to serve as President of Ireland (1990 - 1997), affirms in her book *Climate Justice*, that there are at least 25 million forest-dependent people living in Vietnam alone. 20% of their income is secured from forest resources. FAO (Food and Agricultural

Organisation) states that 250 million people in savanna areas are living in and dependent on the forests for their income and livelihood. These people are mostly ethnic minorities living in poverty.

The disappearance of natural forests around the world affects those living in them, but also the planet. Around 15% of global greenhouse gas emissions is caused by unsustainable deforestation around the world. National Geographic has often spoken about the dangers of logging. By cutting down trees, the forest ground loses its protection of sun rays during the day, and can no longer retain the heat at night. This leads to extreme temperature swings that can be harmful to plants, animals and surrounding communities. Trees use **photosynthesis**, (the process of using energy from the sun and carbon dioxide from the air to make the food trees need to live and grow) which in turn **sequesters** carbon.

The Bureau of Labor Statistic has declared logging as 2019's "most dangerous job in America". Consequently, there is a visible decline in the number of workers choosing to take up positions as loggers. This is ultimately, however, a choice that is only accessible to workers in the **Global North**. Workers in the **Global South** may not have the choice to refuse to work in positions even if they are deemed unsafe.

How can you persuade impoverished communities to eradicate logging when forests are worth more to them dead than alive?

2. Plastic wrapping in supermarkets:

Anita Rani, a British radio and television presenter, researched into the price difference between loose and plastic packaged items in supermarkets. This was filmed and presented in a new series on BBC iPlayer, "War on Plastic". In this series, Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall and Anita Rani explore the gigantic problem of plastic waste pollution. By finding out where it's coming from and educating its viewers, they aim to determine what can be done to try to solve the issue.

Anita Rani worked together with the residents of a street in Bristol, first asking them to layout every single piece of plastic they own out

on the street. This had a big visual impact, and showed just how much we rely on plastics in every single room of our houses. From this, Anita and the residents quickly identified that supermarkets were the main source of the **ubiquitous** single use plastics.



The plastic from each household layed out on the street

For her next experiment, she bought the cheapest ingredients needed for spaghetti bolognese, and asked one of the houses on the street to do the exact same and buy the same ingredients, but without any single use plastic packaging. Every single ingredient Anita bought was packaged, as they were the cheapest options. Although this was already a bit of a surprise, the biggest shock was exposing just how much cheaper Anita's shop was. After buying carrots, meat, cheese, mushrooms, garlic, peppers and tomatoes, her total was £8.77, while the residents total was £13.03.

Anita's shop was £4.26 or 32.7% cheaper than the loose, plastic free ingredients.

What was most disconcerting to her and the residents, was that this result was for one meal. If you translate this to a weekly shop, say for a family of 4, it is clear that there is a serious inequality. Some families simply don't have the option to go for plastic free

ingredients. This can also be written as some families can't afford the commonly advertised sustainable options.

Anita then went on to The Office for National Statistics website to compare the overall price differences between packaged and loose ingredients in big supermarkets. She compared the prices for a big basket of ingredients, specifically one that the government consider are the most regularly bought and use to measure price inflation.

For Tesco, the price of this basket with packaging, cost £42.08, compared to the £59.91 for the loose products.

This means that it is almost 42% more expensive to act sustainably.

Conclusion

What have I learnt from this? What do I want you to remember from this.

Once we have acknowledged the argument that poverty is a core cause of unsustainable behaviour, it is easier to see how all of these topics are dangerously intertwined and dependent on each other.

Poverty - Journalism - Greenwashing - Communities

Areas lacking in public interest news (poorer, deprived areas) perhaps won't get enough valuable information about climate change. Dundee is one of the poorest cities of the UK, where a large proportion live below the poverty line. *The Evening Telegraph*, the "Dundee born and bred" newspaper, only printed two articles featuring climate change in 2019, one of which briefly talked about the Friday school protests. This lack of coverage hurts Dundonians view towards climate change. We have not yet been affected by extreme weathers or natural disasters, which makes it easy to turn a blind eye on this issue.

In their reputable book *Environmental Education Research*, Anja Kollmuss & Julian Agyeman explain how direct experiences have a stronger influence on people's behaviour than indirect experiences. In their words:

"Indirect experiences, such as learning about an environmental problem in school as opposed to directly experiencing it (e.g. seeing the dead fish in the river) will lead to weaker correlation between attitude and behaviour."

It is also argued that science, (for example, the science behind climate change) is privileged knowledge. This was an argument that I had never considered before. Sandra Harding, an American philosopher, explains that scientific knowledge, which is supposed to be objective, is often subjective knowledge of privileged voices. This argument is thoroughly explored through Mary Robinson's previously mentioned book, *Climate Justice*, which examines real case-studies of people all around the world affected by climate change (whether directly or indirectly). The result is clear: the poor, disempowered and marginalised across the world are those most affected by climate change.

However, whilst they have the most first-hand experience, making their expertise indispensable to legislation on climate change, the **Global North** refuses to listen, disregarding the arguments that could be most pertinent to action against climate change.

One of the case scenarios, talks about **indigenous** people, specifically in the arctic. WWF maintains that the arctic is warming twice as fast as any other area on the planet, causing imminent and often irreversible danger to those living there. Many of these people rely on accurate weather predictions to stay safe. This life saving technique and traditional knowledge has been passed down generation to generation and consequently perfected over the years.

The Saami people (**indigenous Finno-Ugric**), have more than 300 ways to describe snow and ice related things. Sadly, because of climate change, some of these words are dying out, their **lexicon** is becoming obsolete, their safety unpredictable and their lives more and more threatened.

Due to the melting ice and coastal erosion, many are having to relocate or somehow adapt. People can no longer accurately predict the weather. This leads to drastic changes in ancient traditions and like Mary Robinson says, these **indigenous** groups that are being displaced have started questioning their cultural identity. How is this fair?

It is clear that to tackle climate change in Dundee, we need to look at local news and bring communities together to raise awareness of what's happening and what we can do as a **community**. I think it is very important to talk about it, discuss things that concern you and see if others have the same concerns. Is there anything you can do together? Question things. You are in control of your **community**!

I hope that with this knowledge you feel equipped to talk and engage with others or to take the small steps that will change your behaviour. I hope to pass on the passion I feel about co-creation and the impactful results it can have not only for yourself but for those around you.

Initiatives and projects around Dundee that you can join:

Dundee Climate Action Network (DCAN)

DCAN was started in 2018 as a networking space for community groups and individuals interested in tackling the climate crisis. The DCAN website was launched with the initial aim of promoting those groups, but also to show the local community all the resources available to live a more sustainable life.

Gate Church Carbon Saving Project

The Carbon Saving Project aims to make Gate Church International the "Greenest Church in Scotland". They have been awarded a grant from the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund to help the local community adopt low carbon lifestyles while providing help to those experiencing poverty across Dundee.

Friends of the Earth Tayside

FoE Tayside is an independent Scottish charity that stands for environmental justice. This means a decent environment for all without using more than our fair share of the world's resources. They campaign on local environmental issues and sustainable development for all.

Little Green Larder

The Little Green Larder offers a plastic free shopping experience, with zero waste alternatives to inspire us to create a greener future.

Birchwood emporium

A zero waste cafe and shop, where you can bring your own containers and make zero waste a habit.

Dundee SOUP

Dundee SOUP is a micro-funding dinner celebrating and supporting creative community projects in Dundee. Its mission is to promote community-based development through crowdfunding, creativity, collaboration, trust and fun. It is a place where everyone is welcomed and supported.

Extinction Rebellion (Dundee)

XR is an international movement that uses non-violent civil disobedience in an attempt to halt mass extinction and minimise the risk of social collapse.

GROW observatory.

A European-wide project engaging thousands of growers, scientists and others passionate about the land. Together, using simple tools to better manage soil and grow food, they contribute to vital scientific environmental monitoring.

Manifesto values:

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 - Education | for yourself and those around you |
| 2 - Proactivity | don't assume others will do it |
| 3 - Community | collective participation is powerful |

Glossary

Community	the people living in one particular area or people who are considered as a unit because of their common interests, social group, or nationality.
Dilapidating	the state of being old and in poor condition.
Finno-Ugric	related to or speaking one of the group of languages that includes Estonian, Finnish, Hungarian, and some languages spoken in some parts of Russia.
Global North	the group of countries that are in Europe, North America, and the developed parts of Asia.
Global South	the group of countries that are in Africa, Latin America, and the developing parts of Asia.
Greenwashing	behaviour or activities that make people believe that a company is doing more to protect the environment than it really is.
Indigenous	existing naturally or having always lived in a place; native.
Lexicon	the words used in a particular language or subject, or a dictionary.
Pejorative	expressing disapproval, or suggesting that something is not good or is of no importance.
Photosynthesis	the process by which a plant uses the energy from the light of the sun to produce its own food.

Sequesters

to separate and store a harmful substance such as carbon dioxide in a way that keeps it safe.

Ubiquitous

found or existing everywhere.

Un-newsed

local communities who are lacking the journalists to listen or represent them are called the un-newsed.

