

**GLOBEQUAKE:
Understanding and Functioning Effectively
In a Rapidly Changing World**

Research Methodology

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**To The Center for Christianity in Business
Houston Baptist University
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Abstract

"We have for the first time in decades a global synchronized recession. Markets have become perfectly correlated and economies are also becoming perfectly correlated. This is not your kind of traditional minor recession."¹ New York University economics professor Nouriel Roubini was addressing the global financial crisis, but the underlying premise affects all societal infrastructures. Historically, there have been thousands of revolutions, which are based on power movements and are short-term, linked to the ability of a particular group to sustain its dominance. However, there have been only a few transformations, which change the "face" of nations and cultures. If Arnold Toynbee is right, there have been only about 21 civilization-producing transformations. The revolutions might be compared to "earthquakes," while the transformations could be analogous to continent-producing "tectonic shifts." Hence, the term, "Globequake," seeks to describe the radical repositioning and redefinition currently experienced worldwide and its impact on the fundamental infrastructures of a society—Values Conservatory, Family, Education, Governance, Marketplace (of products, services, intellectual capital). William Strauss and Neil Howe are historians who focus on change dynamics within nations. They believe there are four "turnings: a "High" (period of expansion and optimism); an "Awakening" (rebellion from the norm and spiritual exploration); "Unraveling" (a troubled time brought on by rising individualism and fragmented institutions); "Fourth Turning" (upheaval and crisis in which societies redefine themselves and their values).² The research here will seek to determine the nature and extent of contemporary change, and its impact on the marketplace and other key societal institutions, along with practical applications for dealing effectively with the sweeping transitions affecting institutional environments.

¹ 'Roubini Sees Nowhere to Hide from Global Slowdown,' By Betty Liu and Eric Martin, January 27, 2009. Retrieved from www.bloomberg.com.

² William Strauss and Neil Howe, *The Fourth Turning, An American Prophecy*, New York: Broadway Books, 1997.

Premise and Mission

The Premise

Contemporary change is global in scale, rapid in speed, and often frightening in style. Institutions who do not understand the nature of modern transformation will not survive the upheavals. Those who recognize and comprehend the Globequake will have a greater chance of developing viable strategic planning models, leading to stability and effectiveness during the “tectonic shifts.” Biblical values and the worldview arising from them constitute a firm foundation that has been tested across time in many cultures, and offer the stable structure for institutions in upheaval.

The Mission

The Globequake Research Project will explore the nature and extent of contemporary global change and how business and other key societal institutions can be stable and effective through application of biblical principles.

Presuppositions and Values

To help institutions survive and be effective in the turbulence of the Globequake requires a solid linkage of research and application. Therefore, the Research Model described here values rigorous and thorough investigation into the dynamics of contemporary change, along with vigorous and relevant models for strategic planning and application of principles discovered in the research. This is the joining of “orthodoxy” with “orthopraxy.” The Globequake Research Model will bring together academics and practitioners.

Steadiness and stability are critical for institutions coping with tectonic shifts in their environments. All systems are structured around an epistemological and philosophical frame. The Globequake Research Model will be predicated upon the enduring biblical worldview, and values this worldview has having stood the test of time and human experience.

There are five “impact zones” of the effects of the Globequake, and these constitute the infrastructures of human civilizations:

- The Values Conservatory (e.g., Church, Mosque, Temple, etc.)
- The Family
- The Educational System
- The Institutions of Governance
- The Marketplace
 - Products
 - Services

- Intellectual Capital

“Economics” (based on Greek, *oikonomia*) refers to the broad ordering of societies and their institutions; therefore, the Globequake Research Model will study and make proposals relating to the “economics” of the institutions in the context of global transformation.

Research Objectives and Anticipated Outcomes

The immediate, short-term objective of the research project will be to produce information useful to the business and corporate community. The information will be used to design a Fall Colloquy at Houston Baptist University, sponsored by The Center for Christianity In Business. The primary target audience will be business and corporate leadership. It is hoped that through the linkage of research and outreach to the business community that HBU/COBE will be

- viewed as a resource for change management skill development
- form a link between the institution and business community
- establish The Center for Christianity In Business as a leader in the academic advancement of biblical principles in business application

Research Methodology

The General Plan

1. There will be a clear identification of issues to be studied and clarified regarding business and the Globequake. This step will be implemented through discussion between HLI principals and HBU COBE faculty.
2. The Research Methodology will be adapted to deal effectively with the identified issues.
3. HLI will initiate gathering of data through “brain trusts” (see below)
4. The first review and analysis of the data gathered will take place
5. Based on initial data, more research issues and questions will be formulated
6. HLI will launch a gathering of new data through the “brain trusts”
7. The second review will take place
8. There will be a thorough analysis of all data collected, through a consortium of HBU COBE faculty and the practitioners comprising the “brain trusts”
9. HLI will produce a workbook for participants in the fall colloquy, based on findings

The 'Brain Trust' Strategy

1. For the purposes of research related to the business and corporate environment, HLI will form specific brain trusts composed of HBU COBE faculty and members of the business/corporate community
2. The business/corporate brain trust will look at the following areas (with others to be added under Step 1 of The General Plan):
 - a. The Globequake and Company Products
 - b. The Globequake and Company Services
 - c. The Globequake and Company Intellectual Capital
 - d. The Globequake and Business Finance
 - e. The Globequake and Human Resources Management and Development
 - f. The Globequake and Strategic Planning and Forecast Models