

**Environment and development—
non-negotiable lifestyles and
uncommon futures**

Details

- <http://classes.maxwell.syr.edu/geo105-001/>
- Webpage gets updated after class—check back
- Write comments, answers to questions, lists of definitions etc. for participation credit—it's not enough to just show up

Questions

- * What are the differing views of development?
- * What was the Earth Summit and why is it important?
- * What is neoliberalism?
 - * What is structural adjustment?
- * What does commodifying nature mean? Page 69-70
- * What is the social production of nature? p.28
- * What did Malthus think and what is NeoMalthusianism?

Development and naming the problem

- Colonialism
- Neocolonialism
- Neoliberalism
- US consumption
- Capitalism
 - Exploitation
 - Environmental degradation
- Development
- 3rd world population—too many of them
- Resource degradation
 - Traditional practices/ignorance
- Scarcity—not enough for some
- Violence
- Poverty and lack of development

Optimists and pessimists

- **Rostow and the miracle of modernization**
- **Tragedy of the Commons 1968 Hardin**
- **Population Bomb 1968**

“The streets seemed alive with people. People eating, people washing, people sleeping. People visiting, arguing and screaming. People thrusting their hands through the taxi window, begging. People defecating and urinating.... People, people, people, people. As we moved slowly through the mob...the dust, noise, heat and cooking fires gave the scene a hellish aspect...Ehrlich 1968

- “to act consistently...we should facilitate...the operations of nature in producing mortality...Instead of recommending cleanliness to the poor we should encourage the contrary...but above all we should reprobate specific remedies for ravaging diseases.” Malthus, 1817

Neo-Malthusians

★ **Malthus**—1798 *Essay on the Principle of Population*

★ **Neo-malthusians**

★ **Tragedy of the Commons + The Population Bomb=environmental destruction=violence**

★ **People abuse the commons**

★ **Carrying capacity: too many people for the earth to sustain**

★ **Environmental degradation as a threat to our common future and national security**

'Our' 'Common' Future?

- ★ **Sustainability: “the ability to ensure the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”**

World Commission on Environment and Development. 1987

- ★ **Is there an ‘our’? Will the future hold anything in common for ‘us’?**
- ★ **Sustainable development**
 - ★ **Environmental protection, economic development and equity=win win**

Earth Summit, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 1992

- * Agenda 21
- * Green and brown agendas—environment vs. development
- * Brown: health, economies, housing
- * Green: protect nature at all costs
 - * Nostalgia for nature in other countries



“The American lifestyle is not up for negotiation”
George Bush Sr. 1992

Earth Summit Johannesburg 2001

- What are we going to do about the US?
- Agreement on water and sanitation



John Turner, leader of the US delegation, said: "We all have to remember that this journey to reduce some of the devastating poverty in the world is a long journey.

We must realise that these targets are no more than lofty aspirations which sit somewhere in the rafters of the UN."

Campaign for Corporate Accountability





The US at the COP 6 November 2000

★ Carbon sinks and
diet management
for cows and pigs



“the president has been unequivocal. He does not support the Kyoto treaty. It is not in the United States’ economic best interest.”



UNICEF's
endorsement of
McDonald's
World Children's
Day drew
criticism from
public health
officials



McWorld

US

5% of world's population consumes

- 25% of the world's fossil fuel

- 20% of metals
- 33% of paper

produces

- 72% of the world's waste

- 24% of total greenhouse gas emissions



Less industrialized
78% of the world's population consumes

- 40% of fossil fuels
- 20% of metals
- 25% of paper
- produces 10% of waste

A few more global stats

- Some did not participate in the growth and productivity achievements of 1945-80
- Absence of redistribution in market-led growth
- 100 countries (1.6 billion people) experienced economic decline
- Half of these countries have average incomes lower than those of 1970 and their average incomes are still declining
- Richest 20% control 86% of world income; poorest 20% control 1.1%

Neoliberalism

* Neoliberalism forces debate on social policy, environmental policy, international development and other matters to be discussed according to the logic of the market

* Policies

* NAFTA, FTAA

* Institutions

* World Trade Organization

* World Bank

* IMF

* Structural adjustment

Challenges to development-as-usual

- * **The American lifestyle is not up for negotiation vs. The world is not for sale—the global justice movement**
 - * **Seattle protest of WTO**
 - * **Mobilization against the FTAA**
 - * **Zapatistas—a response to neoliberalism**
- * **Slow food movement**
- * **Consumerism?**

