

Study Questions, Week 5

Topics for the Week:

Land and Property

Readings for the Week:

Bromley, Daniel W. 1989. Property relations and economic development: the other land reform. *World Development* 17(6):867–877.

Geisler, Charles. 1993. Ownership: an overview. *Rural Sociology* 58(4):532–546.

Questions, Bromley & Geisler Readings:

- (1) What is meant by the term “property?” What types of property relations can exist? What functions do they serve in society?
- (2) What does Bromley mean by “the other land reform?” What options exist for carrying out this land reform?
- (3) Distinguish between public, private, common and non-property regimes. What are the distinguishing characteristics of each?
- (4) In what ways might ownership affect land management practices? Which type of ownership is most likely to produce environmentally sustainable practices?
- (5) Who owns the land in the United States? To what extent do the ideal types of “public” and “private” as described by Bromley apply to conditions in the U.S.?
- (6) What does Geisler mean when he says the American land base is shrinking? What mechanisms facilitate this process?
- (7) Geisler debunks six myths about land ownership in the U.S. For each, explain the “received wisdom” and outline Geisler’s evidence to the contrary.
- (8) Explain some of the differences in land ownership patterns by region (northeast, north central, south, west) in the U.S.