Study Questions

Week 4

Topic for the Week:
Population Change and the Environment

Readings for the Week:


Study Questions:

(1) What, according to Ehrlich, are the significant population issues facing the world? How do these differ in industrialized countries (ODCs in his terminology) and developing countries (UDCs)?

(2) Why is Ehrlich sometimes called a “neo-Malthusian?” Cite evidence from his writings to support your reasoning.

(3) The authors of the UNFPA report assert “sustainable development demands recognition and value for the multitude of ways in which women’s lives intertwine with environmental realities” (p. 40). Explain the conditions in which women live, and how these affect population change and the environment. What might be done to alter these relations?

(4) In what ways does population change affect people’s health? What role does the environment play in this relationship?

(5) Consider the various initiatives undertaken at the global, regional, national and local levels that address issues of population, environment and health. What common themes are evident in the approaches these programs employ? What do these approaches tell us about sustainable development?

(6) What are the major criticisms of the neo-Malthusians (e.g. Paul Ehrlich, Lester Brown)? What evidence do the critics cite to support their positions?

(7) What, according to Commoner, are the primary causes of the environmental crisis that he aims to understand? Would you classify Commoner as a neo-Malthusian? Why or why not?