

Population Pressure

and

Technological Change

Plan of Action

6/16/06

**Topic: Population Change
and Technology**

(1) Boserup

(2) Demography & Politics

Ester Boserup

(1910 – 1999)



Boserup's Questions

(1) What causes people to change how they farm?

~Particularly what social conditions

(2) What is the relationship between changing agricultural technologies and productivity?

Boserup's Challenge to Malthus

“Population growth is here regarded as the independent variable which in its turn is a major factor determining agricultural developments.”

~Boserup, p. 11

Changing Agricultural Technologies

(1) Long Fallow (Rudimentary Technology)

Forest Fallow

Bush Fallow

(2) Short Fallow (Ploughs)

Natural Grazing

Produced Fodder

(3) Intensive Cropping (Irrigation)

Annual Cropping

Key Conclusions

(1) Population Density causes technological change in farming

~As population density increases, it reaches a critical mass that spurs changes in agricultural technologies

(2) Productivity (output per person hour) decreases with greater technology

~More people

~People work more

Questions:

- (1) Compare Boserup to other theorists we have studied. Which does her theory most resemble? Which is most dissimilar?
- (2) What is the relationship between population and food production?