



FACULTY OF SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT & ENERGY STUDIES

MODULE GGR1A2E

(INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN GEOGRAPHY)

CAMPUS APK

EXAM JUNE 2014

DATE: 2014.06.04

SESSION: 08:30 – 11:30

ASSESSOR(S)

MR Z. Simpson

INTERNAL MODERATOR

MRS T. J. McKay

DURATION 3 HOURS

MARKS 100

NUMBER OF PAGES: 4 PAGES

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Read over each question **CAREFULLY** before you start to answer it.
- Write as neatly as possible.
- Please **RULE** off after each answer
- Label each answer carefully in terms of question number.
- This paper consists of **THREE (3)** questions and all questions must be answered in the exam answer sheet provided
- This exam requires that you write an essay. Follow all instructions and guidelines provided in the study guide and in lectures. Your essay must have an introduction and a conclusion. In addition, it must include sections (with headings) with logical, well-structured paragraphs.
- Your essay will be assessed according to the attached assessment criteria. Please read through them carefully.
- Manage your time carefully. Spend no more than 45 minutes on Question 1, 45 minutes on Question 2 and 90 minutes on Question 3.

QUESTION 1

The text below is a selection of FAQ's (Frequently Asked Questions) about International Buy Nothing Day (taken from <http://www.buynothingday.co.uk/faq.html>). The text explains that Buy Nothing Day is a reaction against rampant (uncontrolled, increasing) consumerism on the part of the wealthy. Read the text, and then answer the questions that follow.

What is Buy Nothing Day all about?

Buy Nothing Day (November 29th 2014) is a simple idea, which challenges consumer culture by asking us to switch off from shopping for a day. It is a global stand off from consumerism - celebrated as a holiday by some and street party for others. Anyone can take part provided they spend a day without spending.

Where **did** Buy Nothing Day come from?

Buy Nothing Day was started by Adbusters in the early 90's and has grown into an international event celebrated all over the world.

What is so bad about shopping?

It is not shopping in itself that is so harmful: it is what we buy. The rich western countries – only 20% of the world population – consume over 80% of the earth's natural resources, causing a disproportionate level of environmental damage and unfair distribution of wealth. As consumers, we should question the products we buy and the companies who produce them. The idea is to make people stop and think about the fact that what and how much they buy affects the environment and developing countries. Increasingly, large companies use labour in developing countries to produce goods because it is cheap and there are not systems to protect workers like there are in the west.

What about the environment?

This is a big issue for consumers who are constantly forced to buy unnecessary packaging waste that the big stores and supermarkets produce. Much of this waste is passed onto the consumer who has no choice at the point of purchase. Super brands are the worst offenders, offloading tonnes of pointless packaging onto consumers who are then trusted to recycle it. The challenge to supermarkets and big stores is to remove unnecessary packaging from their stores. The raw materials and production methods that are used to make so many of our goods have harmful side effects such as toxic waste, destruction of wild life, and wasted energy. The transport of food by air also contributes to pollution especially when much of the food can be produced here.

- 1.1 Define the term 'sustainability' and explain what you understand by a sustainable society. What are the principles that ought to underpin such a society? Answer in two well-developed paragraphs. (10)
- 1.2 It is said that we live in a high throughput economy. What does this mean? And why is it problematic? (4)
- 1.3 List four (4) unsustainable practices that sustainable manufacturing tries to avoid. (4)
- 1.4 Give three (3) reasons why *packaging* is an important consideration in achieving sustainability. (3)
- 1.5 What is your opinion on an initiative such as Buy Nothing Day? Is it relevant? Useful? Will it make a difference? Would you participate in it? Answer in one well-developed paragraph, and give reasons for your answer. (4)

SUB-TOTAL [25]

QUESTION 2

The text below details how air pollution in China may have an impact on the climate in the United States. Read the text, and then answer the questions that follow.

China's air pollution leading to more erratic climate for US, say scientists

China's air pollution could be intensifying storms over the Pacific Ocean and altering weather patterns in North America, according to scientists in the US. A team from Texas, California and Washington state has found that pollution from Asia, much of it arising in China, is leading to more intense cyclones, increased precipitation and more warm air in the mid-Pacific moving towards the north pole.

According to the team's findings, which were released on Monday, these changes could ultimately contribute to erratic weather in the US.

The authors used advanced computer models to study interactions between clouds and fine airborne particles known as aerosols, particularly manmade ones such as those emitted from vehicles and coal-fired power plants. One effect, the study says, is an "intensification of the Pacific storm track", a narrow zone over the ocean where some storms that pass over the US begin to gather.

China is fighting to contain the environmental fallout from 30 years of unchecked growth. Of 74 Chinese cities monitored by the central government 71 failed to meet air quality standards, the environmental ministry said last month.

China's top leaders are aware of the extent of the problem. Beijing will soon revise an important piece of legislation and give environmental protection authorities the power to shut polluting factories, punish officials and restrict industrial development in some areas, Reuters reported on Tuesday.

The changes to China's environmental protection law, the first since 1989, will legally enshrine oft-repeated government promises to prioritise environmental protection over economic growth.

Although the legislation's fourth draft is nearing completion, it is still short on details, according to the report. China's legal system is often hostile to pollution-related litigation.

On Monday, a Chinese court rejected a lawsuit by five residents of Lanzhou, a city in the country's north-west, over an incident last week when dangerous levels of the carcinogenic chemical benzene were detected in the water supply. The residents demanded damages, a public apology and water quality data from the city-owned water company.

Author: Jonathan Kaiman

Published in the Guardian, Tuesday 15 April 2014

- 2.1 Explain why China is an important nation to consider in discussions of globalisation and sustainability. (3)
- 2.2 Do you think China is a sustainable society? Give reasons for your answer. (5)
- 2.3 Besides that mentioned in the text (that air pollution causes climate change), list four (4) other effects of air pollution. (4)

- 2.4 If you were an academic or scientist, how would you explain the link between air pollution (particularly carbon dioxide) and climate change to a first-year university student? (5)
- 2.5 Some in China argue that it is unfair to curb their socio-economic development for reasons of sustainability when other countries' development was allowed to take place unchecked. What responsibility, if any, does China have to the rest of the world? Present your argument in two well-developed paragraphs. (8)

SUB-TOTAL [25]

QUESTION 3

In the text below, the author argues that scientists have not done enough to warn people as to the imminent disaster that climate change will bring about. The author suggests that climate change is as much a human rights issue as slavery was many years ago. But, what is climate change? And what causes it? And is it as bad as some authors suggest? In an essay of approximately 3 to 4 pages, critically discuss climate change: its causes and effects. Is climate change the new slavery?

Is climate change the new slavery?

By Gillen D'Arcy Wood

The latest report from the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is out, with its layers of deadening bureaucratic prose. Climate watchers have had their latest chance to make out, as best they can, what biblical futures await us on a hotter, drier, stormier planet. Two sentences from the report's second instalment struck me with the force of a storm surge: "Climate change is projected to progressively increase inter-annual variability of crop yields in many regions. These projected impacts will occur in the context of rapidly rising crop demand." Translation: We'll have smaller harvests in the future, less food, and 3 billion more mouths to feed.

The IPCC has done an heroic job of digesting thousands of scientific papers into a bullet-point description of how global warming is shrinking food and water supplies, most drastically for the poorest of Earth's 7 billion human inhabitants. Being scientists, though, they fail miserably to communicate the gravity of the situation. The IPCC language, at its most vivid, talks of chronic "poverty traps" and "hunger hotspots" as the 21st century unfolds. The report offers not a single graspable image of what our future might actually look like when entire populations of people—not only marginalized sub-groups—face perennial food insecurity and act to save themselves. What decisions do human communities make en masse in the face of total environmental collapse? There are no scientific papers to tell us this, so we must look to history instead for clues to our dystopian future.

To invent a language for climate change, we might start with the historical analogy of slavery. Like our future under climate change, slavery was a human-designed global tragedy that lasted centuries, displaced tens of millions of people, and reorganized the wealth and demographics of the planet. Like climate change, slavery institutionalized the suffering of millions of people from the global south so that folks in Europe and North America (and China) might lead more comfortable, fulfilling lives. And like climate change, few people at the time saw slavery as a serious problem. Even those who believed nothing could be done without bringing about global economic ruin. That exact argument is used today to defend the continuation of our fossil-fuelled societies.

Does that make climate change the new slavery?

SUB-TOTAL [50]