

Environmental Sociology

Possible Test Questions for Test 4:

(be sure to include information from the texts and not just the PowerPoints when answering)

4 questions will be randomly selected

(A few additional questions may be added, I'll send an email if I add any but you can also check back)

1. Stuart identifies two primary causes (or drivers) for our environmental problems (EPs). (a.) Describe each and explain how they contribute to our EPs. (b.) Why does Stuart consider these to be fundamental causes of our EPs? (c.) For each cause, describe several possible solutions.
2. (a) Should it be the responsibility of individuals to actively identify and minimize their environmental impacts? Why or why not? (b) List 5 very different things individuals can do to reduce their environmental impact. Should a focus on individual impacts be a primary focus for solving the environmental problems? Make an argument for (c) yes and then make an argument for (d) no. The more reasons you can give for each case the better. (e) Which argument do you agree with most? Provide your reasoning.
3. (a.) What does the “theory of structural change” propose? (b.) Describe at least three things that could be done to implement the structural changes suggested and for each explain how it would help. (c.) What do we mean by the gross domestic product (GDP) and the Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI)? How are they different and how are they similar? (d) How are they related to the theory of structural change? (e.) Who are opposed to structural changes for solving the environmental problems, Describe at least three groups (be sure to include neo-liberals)? For each group, describe why they are against such changes. (f) Do you think structural change will be used to solve our environmental problems? Explain.
4. When considering our environmental problems, (a) What is the difference between practicing “green consumption” and reducing overall consumption? Make an argument (b) for and against implementing green consumption and (c) for and against implementing an overall reduction in consumption. (d) Which do you believe is more likely to happen. Explain (d1) why one and (d2) not the other?

5. When considering environmental issues: (a) Define individual reflexivity and precautionary consumption. (b) How are they related and how are they different? (c) Is precautionary consumption by individuals a good approach to reducing the use of toxins? Provide reasons for and against implementing precautionary consumption. (d) How do the U.S. and European countries differ with regard to precautionary consumption?
6. (a) What is “ecological modernization (EM)?” What is the argument for it? Provide arguments against it (at least 4)? (b) How is technology related to the theory? (c) Describe current technologies and energy sources that could assist or support EM and several technologies that could perhaps be developed in the future to support EM. (d) How is EM different from precautionary consumption (PC)? What are your thoughts about PC? Do you think it accurately describes what our society should do (why or why not)? (e) Does PC have a chance of being put into practice? (f) Does EM have a chance of being implemented? (g) Which do you support EM or PC and why? Explain.
7. (a) Why do some propose that society should shorten the number of hours people typically work? (b) Describe at least 3 ways this could be accomplished. (c) How might it be enforced? (d) Who is in favor of a shorter work week? (e) What are arguments against shortening the work week? (f) What else beyond the number of hours worked could be done to accomplish the purpose of shortening the work week—describe at least three.
8. (a) What are the major characteristics of a social movement? (b) How might the double movement be applied when considering the environment? In terms of decisions that are within the control of the climate movement organizations, Stuart lists four characteristics that are most likely to make the climate movement organizations successful. (c) Describe at least three of these.
9. (a) Describe three major factors that inhibit individuals from doing things to help reduce EPs? (b) Why else might environmentalists NOT want to rely on individual behaviors to solve EPs?