Garrett Hardin: "The Tragedy of the Commons" (1968, *Science* Magazine)

- 1- "A technical solution may be defined as one that requires a change only in the techniques of the natural sciences, demanding little or nothing in the way of change in human values or ideas or morality." **(Can you think of other environmental problems *can* be solved by technical solutions? Others that can't?)**
- 1- "people who anguish over the population problem are trying to find a way to avoid the evils of overpopulation without relinquishing any of the privileges they now enjoy. They think that farming the seas or developing new strains of wheat will solve the problem—technologically…the solution they seek cannot be found."
- 2-"Can Bentham's goal of 'the greatest good for the greatest number' be realized? No…it is not mathematically possible to maximize for two (or more) variables at the same time." **(Is this a fair critique?)**
- 3- "Natural selection commensurates the incommensurables." **(What does this mean?)**
- **What is the tragedy of the commons? To which policy issues does it currently apply?**
- 6- "Our epicyclic solution [to the problem of the commons as cesspool] is to augment statutory law with administrative law." **(What does this mean?)**
- 8- **Why does Hardin say that solutions grounded in appeals to conscience are "psychologically pathogenic"? Do you agree that** "responsibility is a verbal counterfeit for a substantial *quid pro quo*."
- 9 – "…mutual coercion, mutually agreed upon by the majority of people affected."

Lynn White: "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis" (1967, *Science* Magazine)

- **Why does White open with the anecdote about rabbits in the British countryside?**
- 2- "There are many calls to action, but specific proposals, however worthy as individual items, seem too partial, palliative, negative: ban the bomb, tear down the billboards, give the Hindus contraceptives and tell them to eat their sacred cows…The "Wilderness area" mentality invariably advocates deep-freezing an ecology…But neither atavism nor prettification will cope with the ecologic crisis of our time."
- 3 – "The quite sudden fusion of [science and technology] begs the question of whether a democratized world can survive its own implications. Presumably we cannot unless we rethink our axioms."
- 6- **The Judeo-Christian legacy: humankind as dominator of nature. Do you agree that "Christianity is the most anthropocentric religion the world has ever seen"?**
- "By destroying pagan animism, Christianity made it possible to exploit nature in a mood of indifference to the feelings of natural objects." **What is this saying?**
- 10- "I propose Francis as a patron saint for ecologists" **Do you agree? Disagree?**

Our Common Future, Chairman's Foreward (1987)

- "since the answers to fundamental and serious concerns are not at hand, there is no alternative but to keep on trying to find them." **(Have we succeeded in the last two decades? In some domains but not in others?)**
- "perhaps our most urgent task today is to persuade nations of the need to return to multilateralism." **(What is multilateralism? Unilateralism? Bilateralism?)**
- "The 1972 *UN Conference on the Human Environment* brought the industrialized and developing nations together to delineate the "rights" of the human family to a healthy and productive environment. A string of such meetings followed: on the rights of people to adequate food, to sound housing, to safe water, to access to means of choosing the size of their families." **(Why would "rights" be in quotes here?)**
- "The environment does not exist as a sphere separate from human actions, ambitions, and needs, and attempts to defend it in isolation from human concerns have given the very word "environment" a connotation of naivety in some political circles. The world "development" has also been narrowed by some into a very limited focus, along the lines of "what poor nations should do to become richer." **(What are some other effects of terminology on the way we conceptualize things? Does "developed country" evoke a different image than "more developed country"?)**
- **Bhopal Disaster (1984) and Chernobyl Disaster (1986) further underline the need for "global sustainable development"**