

Discussion Qs

DQs #10 (T 4/30)

1. How is Black Friday indicative of the overwhelming success of the neoliberal economic market (think capitalism) to indoctrinate commodity fetishism into American society?
 - What had the trade-off been for capitalist growth?
 - Why does the author question whether ‘consumerism spurs growth or the economic system’s built-in need for growth drives consumerism’?
 - How does advertising fit into capitalism?
 - How do adverse feedback loops undermine sustainability?
2. What is ‘degrowth’ and why do its advocates argue this model is a necessary step beyond practicing sustainable development?
 - What are no-growth advocates?
 - How and why did degrowth emerge as an economic model?
3. What are the key issues we, as humans, especially people in GN countries, need to address to promote sustainability?
 - How to/ what will/ what can successfully challenge the dominant neoliberal economic paradigm?
 - What are the main policy changes necessary for sustainability through degrowth?

DQs #1 (T-1/29)

1. How does the rise of the credit card undermine sustainability?
2. Why is ‘green plastic’ up for debate?

DQs #1 (TH-1/31)

1. Why are MNCs’ “sustainability” policies more aptly described as “efficiency” policies?
2. How are you most likely to have an impact on the sustainability of the planet?

DQs #2 (T-2/5)

1. How does the capitalist system promote Global South (GS) poverty through commodity exchanges?
2. How did the fair trade (FT) movement shift from one based on charity, instead to a focus of equality and promoting “trade not ‘aid’” as equal exchange?

DQs #2 (TH-2/7)

1. The Doherty, et al., article examines the micro- and macro-economic perspectives and implications of mainstreaming fair trade (FT) products. How do the factors they discuss

highlight the tensions between the radical FT movement and the mainstream approach to FT? (We'll discuss the details in class, but focus on the big picture when answering this question.)

DQs #3 (T-2/12)

1. **Cappuccino Trail** argues that Global North (GN) consumers have become “Foodies without Frontiers.” How do the buying habits the video highlights affect the producers of coffee and other farm-produced commodities?

DQs #3 (TH 2/14)

1. How does the highly-concentrated coffee roasting industry give MNCs an advantage over producers even in a fair trade (FT) model? (Note: This issue is discussed in both the reading and the video.)
2. Why is it important to understand commodity fetishism as a product of the capitalist market to discuss fair trade (FT) issues?

DQs #4 (TH 2/21)

1. How do conventional, GMO methods of farming promote sustainability?
2. What are the main contributing factors to organics movement? (Remember, your answers should come from the readings, not just what you've heard in the news.)
3. Why might people caught up in the wave of the organics movement be wasting their money?

DQs #4 (T 2/26)

1. Why promote food diversity?
2. How is the local food movement similar in its objectives of the original fair trade movement?
3. What issues do both the organic and local food movements attempt to address?
4. What problems do they both encounter?- to answer this, be sure to consider these:
 - a. How would diets have to change for local food movements to succeed?
 - b. How is a 'local' tomato not really local at all?
 - c. Why isn't local synonymous with sustainable?

DQs #5 (TH 2/28)

1. How is the livestock industry a threat to sustainability?
2. What needs to change to make the livestock industry more sustainable?

DQs #5 (T 3/5)

1. What factors interfere with promoting plant-based diets?

2. Why should we eat bugs? Why don't we?
3. How is food waste a sustainability issue?
4. What needs to change to address the issue of food waste?

DQs #6 (TH 3/21)

1. What are the concerns about selling water?
2. How are new supplies of potable water generated?
3. How can existing supplies be made reusable and thus potable?
4. What are the main factors affecting water demand?
5. What strategies could help tackle poor water management?

DQs #7 (T 3/26)

1. What are 'one-ways' and why does much of that plastic now end up going to China?
2. Why doesn't the plastics industry fight or back the Bottle Bill?

DQs #7 (TH 3/28)

1. In what ways do the GN and GS face different waste issues?
2. Why and how are people more sustainably using plastic waste in Global South countries?

DQs #8 (T 4/2)

1. Why aren't Christmas lights recycled in the U.S., but they are in China?
2. How does the harvesting (i.e. collecting) of recyclable materials differ in the U.S. and China?
3. How did Houston move from a city with little recycling to one with a world-class recycling facility?
4. What efforts toward sustainability are people making regarding repairing goods?

DQs #8 (TH 4/18)

1. How has China's recent policy change affected the global recycling system?
2. Why, arguably, won't recycling solve the plastic pollution problem?

DQs #9 (TH 4/25)

1. Why is just banning plastic bags not likely to promote sustainability?
2. How are plastic bags so damaging?
3. What issues interfere with banning plastic bags?
4. What needs to happen to address the bag issue?