

Environmental and social change

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Difficulty of Changing Public Perception on Global Warming

Environmentalists have been surprised by the public's lack of interest on the dreading matter of climate change and global warming. Polls conducted recently have shown that opposition to legislation on climate by the public has escalated during the last decade, although scientific evidence is mounting on the issue. Evidence on global warming is clear today with anything above a two-degree rise in global temperatures, which is an event that is likely in the next 80 years, is almost a certainty that has dangerous and costly consequences. This has led to a rise in emissions by a record amounts without much activity to reduce these emissions. Skeptics of global warming are especially prominent in the US that explains the reason why the country did not ratify the Kyoto Protocol. In addition, since the signing, the US has increased emissions by 20% with Europe reducing emissions by 2%. An answer to this is to be found through a combination of scientific understanding of global warming and interesting ideas in sociology.

Global warming is a result of the inability by Americans to deal with the individualistic consumer culture, as well as the lag time present between emission and the production of global warming, which takes approximately 50 years. The US society is in the throes of individualism and consumerism that makes it difficult to accept or grasp that going for bigger cars and houses, “better food”, and frequent flights are an irresponsibility that has huge ramifications. Culture, inevitably, is always lagging behind reality that is always changing in the economic, social, and environmental environments (Art 33). This leads to increased difficulty that weakens the capability of the political system in dealing with the issues. The US culture is behind the scientific understanding and knowledge of the country's environment. The <https://assignbuster.com/environmental-social-change/>

individual's culture involves an uncomfortable mix of doxa, habitus, and field (Art 34). The three components are interactive in a manner that perpetuates cultural behavior and assumptions even when there are changing realities, which often result in people acting in a way that is not in their best interest. Field can be defined as the intellectual or social arena where individuals spend their active hours; for example, their job, their social group, their profession, or their intellectual profession (Art 44). For the youth, the field is usually their schools. The field, in sum, is constitutive of the realities that govern one's daily existence where the focus is on the efforts meant to advance social and economic interests. Persons may see themselves as being a part of the broad culture and, on a daily basis, may only be perceptive of their immediate environment. Therefore, people embrace their specific culture's narrow field with this field capable of dominating other cultures of influence to them, for example, the issue of global warming (Art 48).

People will necessarily decide to take up a habitus that is a persistent belief or perception that enables them to function, in the field that they feature (Art 49). Because there is the emergence of invariable conflict between one's field objective and the subjective habitus embraced by the individual, he/she will develop beliefs called doxa. The doxa explains gaps and inconsistencies in the comprehension of field reality and subjective habitus. Doxa, therefore, serves to legitimize and self-justify the combination of a specific field objective, in this case capitalism, and subjective habitus relied on to manage participation in their field. This is what transpires with the subject of global warming where most people are not willing to accept its effects, against their daily life and how it will cause it to change.

Works Cited

Art, Robert. International politics : enduring concepts and contemporary issues. Boston : Longman, 2011. Print.