

## Recommended Reading Notes

### Hardins - The Tragedy of the Commons

- Overpopulation depleting the earth's resources
- New technology escalated the situation
- Diff between maximising and optimum population. (optimum = quality of life).
- Tragedy of the commons: when there are no limits on use, members of a group take advantage of a shared resource until it is exhausted. (cattle analogy)
- Overfishing, music from car radios, intrusive billboards infringe on shared vistas
- **Moral is 'system sensitive' - context is important to understand society's values.** Eg. past- killing an animal not harmful to abundant population, nowadays that would be unconscionable.
- Laws tend to be based on "ancient ethics," they tend not to take context into account as much as they should, which can make them "poorly suited" to modern society.
- Statutory law - passed by legislation. Administrative laws are regulations to enforce the statutory laws. Hardin proposes admin law,, while flawed, is better to regulate restraint/activity.
- Merging "freedom to breed with the belief that everyone born has an equal right to the commons" will lead to disaster. Criticises UN for affirming the rights of each family to decide how many children to have
- Appeals to conscience or guilt are self defeating as a way to change beliefs. Humans with a conscience who abstain from breeding will be taken advantage of by those without.
  - **Double blind - if people are asked to stop an activity that is harmful to the commons with an 'appeal to conscience', it gives mixed messages.** 1. Reprimanded for not being responsible if they do not follow recommendations. 2. If they do follow recommendations, they are easily coerced and have given up access whilst others exploit and benefit
  - Therefore guilt is not effective → real sanctions preferable
- Mutual coercion → people coerced by mutual agreements, an individual is free to choose between adhering to social agreements and facing sanctions. Taxes as an example- without penalties, those without consciences would not voluntarily contribute to the communal good.
- **Restrictions don't limit freedom but protect us from each others exploitation.**
- 'preserve and nurture other and more precious freedoms is by relinquishing the freedom to breed."

### Ostrom - Revisiting the Commons: Local lessons, Global Challenges

Hardin - statements have been used to rationalise central govt control of all common pool resources and to paint a disempowering, pessimistic view of the human prospect. Solutions must be imposed upon by external authorities.

**Common pool resources (CPR)** - natural and human constructed resources in which

1. Exclusion of beneficiaries through physical or institutional means is especially costly
2. Exploitation by one user reduces availability for others.
3. Characteristics affect the problems of devising control regimes: size and carrying capacity of the resource system, measurability of the resource, temporal and spatial availability of resource flows, amount of storage in the system, how fast resources regenerate, whether they move/are stationary, how various harvesting technologies affect patterns of regeneration.