

Group 2

Bill McKibben: *A special moment in history: the future of population* and *Thinking Past Ourselves*

1. After reading McKibben's articles, does anyone still not believe in climate change? Why or why not?

A special moment in history: the future of population

2. Is progress necessarily the increase of population? (pg 251) Can we still have progress and wilderness?
3. McKibben states that it was "the public-health revolution...that set us galloping" (pg 252). Does morality affect progress or is it just the advance of technology and medicine?
4. On pg 253, McKibben lists some contemporary critics of Malthus. Is Malthusian thought dead?
5. McKibben mentions one argument made by Julian Simon who states that "human intelligence will get us out of any scrape, that human beings are 'the ultimate resource'" (pg 261). McKibben says himself that "we may be giants, but we are clever giants" (pg 254). Can human ingenuity solve global warming (if you believe it exists)?
6. Do you believe that global warming is the challenge for our generation? (pg 266)

Thinking Past Ourselves

7. Why is this second article so much more optimistic than the first one 10 years earlier?
8. What do you believe is the essence of human nature? (pg 269) Do you believe it to be individualistic and consumerist?
9. Is selfishness a bad thing? (pg 269)
10. How does our American culture affect the environment in the sense of our individualism? (pg 269)