

A generation is only worth as much as the legacy it leaves behind. For what legacy will this generation, my generation, be left with? A world choking on the pollutants of its so called caretakers? The world is steadily growing closer and closer to a resource crisis. Whether it be water, oil, clean air, forestry, one can't possibly ignore this steady depletion forever. At the rate that humanity is overusing Earth's resources, my generation will reach its prime in the midst of a resource crisis. The causes and remedies for this bleak future vary from individuals' actions to the regulations and laws governments do, or do not, put in effect.

The earth's delicate balance of providing and renewing resources can't keep up with growing human consumption. Factors such as climate change, overpopulation, and deforestation play important roles in resource depletion (reference.com). Not all factors are as straightforward as they may seem. Factors like population growth are projected to have less than 1 percent growth in 2020 (worldometers.info). This doesn't neutralize the problem of overpopulation. This is due to the fact that overpopulation depends on many factors than just birth and death rates.

Better medical facilities result in lower death rates which lead to more humans piling up, thus increasing the overpopulation phenomenon. Overpopulation then leads to increased demand on resources. In order to provide for the population's needs, more resources are required. In turn, this leads to more resource use causing the world to fall closer into an age of resource depletion.

Keep in mind that this is just the effects of one factor. This said "resource crisis" will start piece by piece. As certain resources deplete, demand will only increase. In the midst of this demand nations may start wars over rare, but vital resources. Some nations may go as far as to withhold resources from lower social classes and criminals.

What does this mean for my generation? Well, the future is by nature unpredictable, but many educated predictions show that my generation will face a earth on the brink of resource destruction. The United Nations projects that by 2025, 1.8 billion people won't have water to drink (theworldcounts.com). Peak coal extraction is predicted to be reached between 2025-2048 (theworldcounts.com). Phosphorous is believed, by the Global Phosphorus Research initiative, to reach peak in 2030 (theworldcounts.com). These are just a few examples of many resources on the line. The timeframe of all of the examples is directly in the middle of this generation's prime. It'll be up to my generation to recover our world. A world where 2 billion people won't have access to clean water; a world where dependence on coal supply will be the biggest motivation for war; a world where people suffer from the pollution and carelessness of the previous generation.

Not all is lost though. This theoretical future is based on projections of the world as it is now. This leads me to hope that it can be reversed and improved. If zero-carbon emission energy sources are able to compete with the "reliable" energy sources used by large factories can be established, and put into effect within 40 or so years, the effect of global change can be halted before it is too late (IEEE Spectrum). With the increased rate of technological advancement such an energy source could soon exist.

Not all factors of resource depletion can be so easily remedied, like overpopulation. The remedies for this factor have raised ethical and political issues and questions. The only remedy for population growth is to stop people from having children, which would be physically impossible and would constrain the basic human right "to pursue happiness." Although a bolder, possibly more achievable, solution is possible. Space and the celestial bodies within it show endless possibility for space and resources. Famed scientist, Stephen Hawking believed that space is possibly humanity's only hope.

Several factors fuel the great obstacle of an impending resource crisis. Although not all is lost, tomorrow's innovators and great minds have the ability to reverse the damages our predecessors have caused. My generation has the ability to prevent a bleak future that has been set for humanity. The real concern is if this future can be prevented before it passes the point of no return. Technological advancement makes all of this a plausible victory. So thus, the question is not if it is possible, but if we can achieve such remedies before it is too late.