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**Power, Justice, and the Environment: A Critical Appraisal of the Environmental Justice Movement, edited by David N. Pellow & Robert J. Brulle**

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*Power, Justice, and the Environment: A Critical Appraisal of the Environmental Justice Movement.* Edited by David N. Pellow & Robert J. Brulle. Cambridge MA, The MIT Press, 2005. Pp. 349. \$62.00 cloth; \$27.00 paperback.

This text is an excellent critical assessment of the Environmental Justice (EJ) movement. The authors and editors provide timely insights on where the EJ movement stands and take the first steps to promote dialogue on change and improvement. The authors encourage organizations, researchers, and institutions to focus their efforts, clearly define their vision of EJ, and reconsider strategies to achieve EJ in the future. The book is divided into three parts: I. Environmental Equity and Justice: Progress or Retreat? [i.e. a status report], II. New Strategies for Achieving EJ, and III. EJ and the Challenges of Globalization. Activists, scholars, and practitioners present a broad view of EJ and explicitly or implicitly provide a critical lens on the movement's successes and failures.

The very well-written introduction provides a reflective summary of the EJ movement as a union of the civil rights movement and the environmental movement. As such, EJ has both suffered and benefitted from a wide range of applications and definitions. For instance, EJ may be applied to virtually any circumstance, community, species, or situation because all human economic activity produces benefits and costs, and currently those benefits and costs are not distributed equally. Thus, the authors urge everyone affiliated with the EJ movement to take a critical look at what has worked and what has not worked. The EJ movement needs to ask, When does an issue fit into EJ? How does that status benefit or influence the outcome of that issue? How does a scholarly approach or investigation help or hinder an issue?

The editors Pellow and Brulle state that "[t]he EJ movement is a political response to the deterioration of the conditions of everyday life as society reinforces existing social inequities while exceeding the limits to growth" (p. 3). The editors are not optimistic about the results of the EJ movement to date. Despite three decades of EJ work and a century of environmentalism, pollution and resource consumption is increasing, the quality of the environment is deteriorating, and minority and poor communities continue to bear a greater environmental burden than more wealthy segments of society.

The authors report that the EJ movement has had local victories and has gained notoriety. Leaders in many institutions and government positions use the term EJ, while philanthropic organizations continue to fund EJ efforts and research. But the EJ movement has failed to produce a law or act on the federal level and has failed to successfully prosecute under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and leaders have failed to develop a coherent national strategy (p. 294). Ultimately, to succeed the EJ movement

needs to confront and change the “capitalist growth economy,” protect the natural and human built environment, and alter the U.S. political economic structure with regard to ecological protection and social justice (p. 3). No small feat.

Section I compares the EJ movement with the civil rights movement, examines the effects of framing EJ, analyzes how it appears easier to oppose a new project rather than redress old transgressions, and offers an activist’s perspective. A chapter that reflects cutting edge research strategies urges scholars to collaborate with EJ activists and professional environmentalists at all levels of research to define, collect, and analyze cases. All voices in the EJ movement offer insight and useful perspectives. Each chapter in this section is engaging and taken as a whole paints a full picture of the EJ movement.

Section II broaches new strategies to achieve EJ. This is the most ambitious portion of the text. One strength of the text is that it challenges us to ask whether we can radically change a system from within. This section forces the reader to consider the magnitude of the EJ challenge – essentially how to change the global political-economic juggernaut that favors wealthy powerful interests. This section includes strategies in topics such as energy, food, and collective health issues (e.g., asthma). The section also investigates the role of autonomy, the promise of legal avenues for justice, the emerging role of states, NGO governance structures, and models for collaboration. This section provides rich opportunities for continued discussion.

Section III of the text expands the EJ model to the world and the challenge of globalization. The primary sources of power and decision making lie in the North and the South generally bears the brunt of environmental degradation and exploitation. The editors hinge the success and survival of the EJ movement (both national and global) on its ability to “go global” (p. 296). This section, like the global EJ movement it investigates, has the most potential for expansion and future contribution from scholars and activist alike. Perhaps more voices (north and south) may be able to shed light on initiatives that seek EJ. But, as the authors and editors accurately report, changing practice in the United States is merely daunting, while investigating and changing the dynamics of political-economic power on a global scale is several times more complicated and challenging.

The text leaves the reader with the recognition that the EJ movement has seen successes and that there is room to improve. The successes are achievements showing that communities can influence their health, their environment, and their well-being. As a critical review of the EJ movement, the book makes a significant contribution to the field using a variety of voices. My one criticism is that some chapters may be a challenge to follow for those of us not immersed in the academic field. On the other hand, the uneven voices reflect the broad scope of individuals and interests in the EJ movement.

The editors provide solid suggestions to EJ scholars and activists to collaborate with the goal to improve the EJ movement. They recommend that scholars not only report on what is happening, but offer solutions, advocate for positive change, and link EJ to other fields to build theory as well as practice. Environmental justice activists should strive for a coordinated national strategy; build and mobilize resources; frame problems in terms of class, gender, and national inequities as well as race-based problems; and forge stronger links to the mainstream (corporate) environmental organizations. The editors and authors sought to assess the EJ movement and initiate a dialogue that will ultimately strengthen the movement. For students, scholars, activists, and practitioners ready to engage in the dialogue, this is an excellent place to start.

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*Environmental Protection and the Social Responsibility of Firms: Perspectives from Law, Economics, and Business.* Edited by Bruce L. Hay, Robert N. Stavins & Richard H.K. Vietor. Washington, D.C.: Resources for the Future Press, 2005. Pp. 218. \$39.95 paperback.

The current paradigm of environmental regulation, now in its fourth decade, faces increasing challenges under the strain of an expanding population and burgeoning conflicts over resource quantity and quality. One alternative for addressing this strain and for correcting un-regulated environmental harms is an increased role for corporate social responsibility (CSR). The concept of CSR has regained broad appeal in response to perceived negative social and environmental effects from market globalization and trade liberalization over the last decade or so. The questions that confound advocates of CSR, however, is how far it can be legitimately pushed before the courts reign in the discretion of corporate managers to protect shareholder interests and whether society is best served by corporations that seek to increase public welfare by means other than maximizing profits.

In *Environmental Protection and the Social Responsibility of Firms*, authors Einer Elhauge, John Donahue, Mark Roe, Paul Portney, Dennis Aigner, Daniel Esty, Forest Reinhardt, Eric Orts, and David Vogel offer a glimpse of a future where corporations, not regulations, can be, but maybe ought not be, the environment's savior. Editors Bruce L. Hay, Robert N. Stavins, and Richard H. K. Vietor advance the interdisciplinary discussion of CSR by drawing from the language and concepts of the disparate fields