



The Environmental Justice Reader: Politics, Poetics, and Pedagogy

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From the First National People of Color Congress on Environmental Leadership to WTO street protests of the new millennium, environmental justice activists have challenged the mainstream movement by linking social inequalities to the uneven distribution of environmental dangers. Grassroots movements in poor communities and communities of color strive to protect neighborhoods and worksites from environmental degradation and struggle to gain equal access to the natural resources that sustain their cultures.

This book examines environmental justice in its social, economic, political, and cultural dimensions in both local and global contexts, with special attention paid to intersections of race, gender, and class inequality. The first book to link political studies, literary analysis, and teaching strategies, it offers a multivocal approach that combines perspectives from organizations such as the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice and the International Indigenous Treaty Council with the insights of such notable scholars as Devon Peña, Giovanna Di Chiro, and Valerie Kuletz, and also includes a range of newer voices in the field.

This collection approaches environmental justice concerns from diverse geographical, ethnic, and disciplinary perspectives, always viewing environmental issues as integral to problems of social inequality and oppression. It offers new case studies of native Alaskans' protests over radiation poisoning; Hispanos' struggles to protect their land and water rights; Pacific Islanders' resistance to nuclear weapons testing and nuclear waste storage; and the efforts of women employees of maquiladoras to obtain safer living and working environments along the U.S.-Mexican border.

The selections also include cultural analyses of environmental justice arts, such as community art and greening projects in inner-city Baltimore, and literary analyses of writers such as Jimmy Santiago Baca, Linda Hogan, Barbara Neely, Nez Perce orators, Ken Saro-Wiwa, and Karen Yamashita—artists who address issues such as toxicity and cancer, lead poisoning of urban African American communities, and Native American struggles to remove dams and save salmon. The book closes with a section of essays that offer models to teachers hoping to incorporate these issues and texts into their classrooms. By combining this array of perspectives, this book makes the field of environmental justice more accessible to scholars, students, and concerned readers.

CONTENTS

Introduction: Environmental Justice Politics, Poetics, and Pedagogy / *Joni Adamson, Mei Mei Evans, and Rachel Stein*

Environmental Justice: A Roundtable Discussion with Simon Ortiz, Teresa Leal, Devon Peña, and Terrell Dixon / *Joni Adamson and Rachel Stein*

Politics

1. Testimonies from Doris Bradshaw, Sterling Gologergen, Edgar Mouton, Alberto Saldamando, and Paul Smith / *Mei Mei Evans*

2. Throwing Rocks at the Sun: An Interview with Teresa Leal / *Joni Adamson*

3. Endangered Landscapes and Disappearing Peoples? Identity, Place, and Community in Ecological Politics / *Devon G. Peña*

4. Who Hears Their Cry? African American Women and the Fight for Environmental Justice in Memphis, Tennessee / *Andrea Simpson*
5. Radiation, Tobacco, and Illness in Point Hope, Alaska: Approaches to the "Facts" in Contaminated Communities / *Nelta Edwards*
6. The Movement for Environmental Justice in the Pacific Islands / *Valerie Kuletz*

Poetics

7. Toward an Environmental Justice Ecocriticism / *T. V. Reed*
8. From Environmental Justice Literature to the Literature of Environmental Justice / *Julie Sze*
9. "Nature" and Environmental Justice / *Mei Mei Evans*
10. Activism as Affirmation: Gender and Environmental Justice in Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms* and Barbara Neely's *Blanche Cleans Up* / *Rachel Stein*
11. Some Live More Downstream than Others: Cancer, Gender, and Environmental Justice/ *Jim Tarter*
12. Struggle in Ogoniland: Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Cultural Politics of Environmental Justice/ *Susan Comfort*
13. Toward a Symbiosis of Ecology and Justice: Water and Land Conflicts in Frank Waters, John Nichols, and Jimmy Santiago Baca/ *Tom Lynch*
14. Saving the Salmon, Saving the People: Environmental Justice and Columbia River Tribal Literatures/ *Janis Johnson*
15. Sustaining the "Urban Forest" and Creating Landscapes of Hope: An Interview with Cinder Hypki and Bryant "Spoon" Smith/ *Giovanna Di Chiro*

Pedagogy

16. Teaching for Transformation: Lessons from Environmental Justice/ *Robert Figueroa*
17. Notes on Cross-Border Environmental Justice Education/ *Soenke Zehle*
18. Changing the Nature of Environmental Studies: Teaching Environmental Justice to "Maintstream" Students/ *Steve Chase*
19. Teaching Literature of Environmental Justice in an Advanced Gender Studies Course/ *Jia-Yi Cheng-Levine*

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