



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.

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