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### Brian Tokar and Tamra Gilbertson (eds.), "Climate Justice and Community Renewal: Resistance and Grassroots Solutions."

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**Brian Tokar and Tamra Gilbertson (Eds.).** *Climate Justice and Community Renewal: Resistance and Grassroots Solutions*. Routledge 2020. 266 pp. \$160.00 USD (Hardcover 9780367228484); \$45.99 USD (Paperback 9780367228491).

Divided into sixteen chapters—plus an introduction and a conclusion—*Climate Justice and Community Renewal*, edited by Brian Tokar and Tamra Gilbertson, delivers a global overview of the current state of climate justices. Despite the recent flooding of sections of New York, it is clear by now that there are ‘disproportional impacts of climate disruptions on the world’s most vulnerable people’ (2). Tokar argues that ‘climate justice advocates have also been in the forefront of critiquing policy measures that aim to implement emissions reduction through so-called market mechanisms’ (3).

It is even worse when one considers that less than ten years ago, ‘the wealthiest 10% of individuals worldwide were responsible for 59% of resource consumption and the poorest half of the world were ... only responsible for about 7%’ (5). At around the same time, many became aware that ‘the wealthiest 10% of the global population are now responsible for 49% of individual emissions’ (5).

One of the problems of the global imbalance may well be biofuel causing a ‘massive expanse of land away from food crops ... polluting and then capturing and locking up pollutants in some carbon prison is not a new idea. It is a brilliant marketing spin’ (21). Yet, the focus on fuel can have additional consequences.

‘Many environmental groups have chosen to be silent on the issues of large dams [for example], as they must choose their battles and have prioritised opposition to fossil fuel’ (31). The conversion of nature into biofuel production, large dams, and marketing spin can be easily observed in a country like Brazil. ‘In the era of President Jair Bolsonaro, the oil industry’s expansion policy is focusing on the privatization of Petrobras, Shell, BP, Chevron, Total, Statoil/Equinor, Repsol, and other companies from Portugal, China, and the US are directly investing in [the] new frontier’ (43) opened up by Bolsonaro.

To some extent, it is fair to say that what happens in Brazil also happens in India where ‘climate change doesn’t make India’s *nouveau riche* vulnerable; instead it provides new opportunities to grow richer’ (52). To camouflage rampant environmental vandalism, ‘climate change mitigation in India remains largely a chimera’ (53). Caused by global warming, a different problem emerged in a different corner of the world.

‘Scientists announced that five Solomon Islands have disappeared due to rising sea levels’ (70). It does not stop there. During Donald Trump’s presidency in 2018, the US Department of Defense predicted that ‘more than a thousand low-lying islands risk becoming uninhabitable by the middle of the century—or possibly sooner—because of rising sea levels’ (70).

In the US, rising sea levels will also impact ‘Florida, Louisiana, California, New York, and New Jersey’ (75), as well as ‘Guangzhou and Shanghai, China; Hong Kong; Mumbai, India; Amsterdam, Netherlands; Lagos, Nigeria; Manila, Philippines; Dakar, Senegal; and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam’ (79). Much of this is the bitter consequence of a system that supports big businesses, a system that, of course, also includes corporate lobbying where ‘the oil, gas, and coal industries [have] spent a whopping \$543 million on lobbying in 2009 [while] alternative energy companies spent less than \$32 million’ (83).

For those without corporate dollars, protest remains the preferred option to fight environmental vandalism and global warming. Parkin argues that ‘protest [is] more important than

public opinion or legitimate advocacy in influencing federal environmental law' (84). This is the case even when the other side operates what 'Earth First! Founder Mike Roselle [calls], first they ignore you, then they sue you' (89). When all their corporate lobbying and court cases fail, polluting corporations offer compensation. Examining the case of 'African Climate Justice' Mithika Mwenda and Patrick Bond write, 'their initial offer of an annual \$10 million was not enough to buy us coffins' (109).

This is only going to get worse and it will do so not just in Africa. Desmond Tutu writes, 'we are facing impending disaster on a monstrous scale [condemning] Africa to incineration' (110). This is what global heating means for the vast areas of the world—incineration. Perhaps Greta Thunberg, in her usual clarity, was not wrong when saying, 'either we choose to go on as civilisation or we don't' (111). Closing with, 'we are in the beginning of a mass extinction. And all you can talk about is money and fairy-tales of eternal economic growth' (112).

Two chapters on water—the Cochabamba water war' (150) and 'water defines Detroit' (180) show the impact of privatization of water can have on local communities. The people in and around Detroit suffered not only from 'lead contamination of the water' (173), but also from 'Detroit's water shut-offs' (172) impacting mostly the poor. Privatization is all but one 'mechanism [of] the financialization of nature' (184). On a grander scale, as Tom Goldtooth outlines, '[t]he Paris Agreement is a trade agreement, nothing more. It promises to privatise, commodify, and sell forested lands as carbon offsets in fraudulent schemes ... essentially, those responsible for the climate crisis not only get to buy their way out of compliance but they also get to profit from it as well' (185).

In the chapter on 'an ecofeminist perspective,' Terran Giacomini argues that we need a 'transition from life-denying capitalism to a life-affirming, post-capitalist commons' (195). Giacomini adds that 'all over the world, fossil capitalism has violated human rights and the rights of nature ... and undermined local subsistence and communal social relations' (199). Supporting this, Kelly Roache maintains that 'we must resist the neoliberal imperatives for scalable solutions or one-size-fits-all roadmaps' (234).

Tamra Gilbertson ends the exquisite book by saying that 'there is no evidence that the environmental and climate change problems we face today, or any complex social and economic problems of this scale, can be effectively tackled by economic incentives of the sort offered by capitalism' (237)—a sobering thought.

In the end, *Climate Justice and Community Renewal* does not offer a detailed, theoretical or even philosophical discussion of what the editors and authors understand climate justice to be. Instead, and this is largely because of the book's insightful contributions from many parts of the world, the volume offers valuable lessons drawn from a global perspective. The book's potpourri of case studies and thoughtful illuminations on the issue of global warming offers an indispensable contribution to the current debate on climate justice.

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