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**Review of *The Quest for Environmental Justice: Human Rights and the Politics of Pollution*. Robert D. Bullard (Ed.). Reviewed by John G. McNutt.**

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conclusions about what is “better” in national systems of social provision.

Of course, the book has some weaknesses. Several countries are conveniently dropped because they don’t fit the simple dualistic comparison that Pontusson wants to make. The analysis is based on few observations and on aggregate data that hides many of the differences between welfare states, and in particular the role of familial and informal provision. It would have been good to have more open discussion about differences within the liberal market states and in particular, the so-called “exceptional” position of the U. S. A. and how this book’s analysis compares to that recently made by Alesina, and Glaeser, for instance. But overall, there is every reason to buy, read and encourage others to read this book.

Martin Evans  
University of Bath

Robert Bullard (Ed.), *The Quest for Environmental Justice: Human Rights and the Politics of Pollution*. San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club Books, 2005. \$18.95 papercover.

As I write this, the Hurricane Katrina disaster in the U.S. Gulf Coast remains fresh in our memories. This ecological disaster affected all classes and races in profound and terrifying ways, but the poor and members of oppressed minority groups suffered much more. Readers of Robert Bullard’s new book on environmental justice would not have been surprised and will understand that the actual problem is much deeper. What we learned from Katrina was just the tip of the iceberg. Environmental destruction and its consequences for our most vulnerable groups goes much further than many think.

*The Quest for Environmental Justice* is an excellent overview of the state of environmental justice currently being debated. Edited by Robert Bullard, one of the field’s formulators and longtime leaders, the book’s fourteen chapters provide a solid treatment of the major debates in the field. This book is both fascinating and horrifying in its implications. It also provides hope as community activists achieve some notable successes

against long odds and in the face of terrible adversity.

The book begins with three chapters, mostly by Bullard, that set the stage for the remainder of the work. The Introduction provides an overview of the history and development of the environmental justice movement. This is followed by an illustration of the problem of environmental justice as it applies to the case of Houston, Texas. Chapter 3 puts an immediate human face on the problem with discussions of female environmental activists.

The second section deals with environmental issues in "Fence Line Communities," those that are located just outside of polluting facilities. Beverly Wright's discussion of Cancer Alley in Louisiana is especially shocking. The damage done to this highly vulnerable area and the struggles of communities to maintain themselves is graphic and almost difficult to read. Environmental Lawyer Olga Polmar discusses the situation in Camden, N.J. and sheds light on the limitations of the legal system in redressing these issues. Perhaps more research oriented is Manuel Pastor, Jr. and his colleagues' discussion of the use of research to combat environmental inequity in Los Angeles.

Section three concentrates on land rights. The first chapter in this section is an interesting treatment of the problem of racism and land availability of community parts in Los Angeles. This is not always what comes to mind when we discuss environmental justice, but authors Garcia and Flores make a strong case for its importance. Next, Gedicks discusses the impact of land and extractive industries on Native Americans. Finally, Peña examines the impact of environmental injustice on Chicanos in the Southwest.

The final section looks at human rights and global justice issues. Collin and Collin do a masterful job of explicating the theoretical and legal issues needed to develop an affirmative policy framework to combat and redress environmental injustices. Next, Santana examines the struggle of residents of the island of Vieques to deal with its use as a U.S. Navy weapons testing and training facility. Following that, Douglas and colleagues turn attention to the Niger Delta in Nigeria and paint a depressing picture of how multinational corporations can create wholesale environmental carnage in third world

nations. The book then turns its attention to South Africa and the impact of neoliberal economic policies, supported (surprisingly) by the governing African National Congress (ANC), on the health and environmental safety of workers. It is not a pretty picture, to say the least. In the final chapter, Bullard and his coauthors pull the themes together and review some future developments. This last chapter, probably written long before August 2005, seems to predict the Katrina/Rita/Wilma disaster.

This is a well developed, interesting and important volume. While the integration between chapters isn't flawless, it is better than one usually finds in edited books. The papers are of very good quality, are well written, scholarly and provocative. It would be very good for background reading on environmental justice, or as a course text for a community organization or social policy course. I strongly recommend it to anyone who is interested in the environment, social justice and racism or grassroots action. You may find yourself shaken, but you won't be disappointed.

John G. McNutt  
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Rachel G. Bratt, Michael E. Stone and Chester Hartman, *A Right to Housing: Foundations for a New Social Agenda*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2006. \$40.00 papercover.

What does the term "housing" mean? There are a variety of definitions incorporating physical, social, or psychological dimensions. More complex definitions include aspects of all three constructs. These rich definitions posit that a house is not always a home, and a home is not necessarily a house. Home is more than physical shelter—it is also a safe place, a place that provides identity and a sense of connection to the larger world. Likewise, one can feel at home without literally having one's own discrete shelter.

This book does an excellent job of taking into account this broader notion of housing, while remaining focused on those in