

are not discussed. The weakness is exacerbated at the international level. For example, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea is not mentioned. The essay on the European Union elides the issue of Community competence. The Snail Darter decision is discussed but not Trail Smelter.

A final avoidable problem is that the thematic entry list leaves out much that is in the book and therefore is an unreliable window into what follows. The book does contain numerous cross-references that are useful, but they do not substitute for a good schematic of what is available to the reader.

As for unavoidable lapses, it is easy to pick at a book of this depth and ambition. Just to give a couple of examples, the encyclopedia has entries for people who should be forgotten like James Watt and Anne Burford, but not leaders who should be remembered like William Reilly or Mostafa Tolba. Even worse, it totally omits René Dubos and barely mentions Barbara Ward. The encyclopedia of politics also leaves out the Global Legislators for a Balanced Environment. And amusingly, Norway gets the shortest size entry while Luxembourg is spread across two pages.

Notwithstanding these flaws, this project has produced a useful and reader-friendly encyclopedia. It is a valuable, extensive reference work that warrants a place in every research library that covers the environment.

Jennifer Clapp. 2001. *Toxic Exports: The Transfer of Hazardous Wastes from Rich to Poor Countries*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

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Globalization has not been kind to the environment. Growing levels of production and consumption around the world have generated growing volumes of nasty stuff, which no one wants in his or her back yard. Where to put it? In the old days, toxic wastes were dumped hither and thither, often with unedifying and unhealthy results. As regulations got tougher during the 1970s and 1980s, the costs of "safe" disposal began to rise precipitously. It became cheaper to ship the stuff abroad—out of sight, out of mind, out of the back yard. But everywhere is somebody's back yard, and nasty stuff has a way of biting back, turning up in unexpected places.

In the long-awaited *Toxic Exports*, Jennifer Clapp provides us with a guidebook to the business of making, moving, and managing all of those hazardous wastes generated by contemporary industrialism and capitalism. The picture she paints is not a pretty one. Many of those backyards were in developing countries, and many times those wastes were dumped without the recipients' knowledge. The endless voyages of toxic flying Dutchmen during the 1980s made headlines, as did the consequences for peoples' health and the environment.

In response, a growing number of countries and organizations determined to do something about the problem. During the 1990s, a growing number of

the countries agreed that it would be a good idea to control international trade in toxics from some countries to other countries and they even cobbled together a ban on waste shipments from developing to developing countries. Unfortunately, the Basel Convention and Ban were not strongly supported by either industry or the United States. And, while the Convention is international law, the Ban has been ratified by less than half of the countries required for it to go into force. The Convention has had some positive effects: "illegal" international shipments of toxics appear to have been halted almost completely. Still, there are so many loopholes in the law that any sufficiently inventive producer or trader can find some way around it. And industry has found new ways to continue and even increase exports of toxic materials from North to South while claiming that these represent a net environmental benefit to the world!

Such artful sleight-of-hand rests on the question: When is waste not waste? When is it "recyclable." Much toxic waste consists of a hodge-podge of chemicals, metals, and materials, and something in the mix is bound to be useful, if it can be extracted. Old computers are laced with toxic stuff, but they also contain small quantities of gold and other precious metals. Some things that are garbage to us, such as dead lead acid car batteries, are valuable to others. All of these things can be shipped to developing countries under an appropriate label, where the "good" stuff is extracted, usually under very unsafe conditions, while the rest is thrown out the back. Needless to say, this is not healthy for people and other living things.

But there's more! Why go to all the trouble of exporting waste? Why not export the waste producing processes themselves, to places with lax environmental regulations and enforcement? That's another loophole discussed by Clapp. There is a long-standing debate about whether polluting industries actually relocate to countries with weak environmental standards. The data are none too clear on this point. Environmental costs are generally assumed to be a rather small part of doing business but, as Clapp shows, they might be sufficiently large to tip the balance in many cases. And arguments that production in developing countries is more likely to be "clean," since companies building new plants will use the best available technology, also appear to hold little water. A growing number of older, dirty factories are being dismantled and moved, while the uncertainties associated with clean innovations may well put off investors in them.

Finally, there is the problem of regulating these activities: who is going to do it? Performance-based environmental standards promulgated by governments are being discredited more and more for being "costly" and "inefficient" (and smacking of Soviet-style command-and-control). In their place, Clapp writes, market-based self-regulation is being touted by business and states alike as the answer. Although no one has yet had the nerve to propose tradable toxic waste permits (it's only a matter of time), industry is being encouraged to set its own rules for environmental management. The best known of these arrangements is the International Organization for Standardization's ISO-14000,

which stipulates only that companies develop their own internal performance standards and periodically assert that they have been met. We can rest easy, seeing the ISO sticker. This seems rather like having the fox certify that the hens he is guarding are certainly quite tasty!

At the end of the day, Clapp remains rather skeptical that the various regimes, conventions, protocols, laws, standards, and regulations designed to safely “manage” toxic wastes are having much effect. She offers a cogent chapter of policy recommendations for improving their regulation and reducing their volumes, a necessity for a volume decrying environmental mismanagement. As is often the case, however, we know *what* to do about the issue. *Why* these things are not done is the problem, and that is a question that Clapp never really confronts. It is, in any event, a subject for another book. But for that small criticism, *Toxic Exports* is an extremely informative and useful book. It belongs on everyone’s shelf and ought to be required reading in every class on global environmental politics.