

sion to the aquaculture case, for example, he suggests that existing nation-state-based forms of regulation “will probably not be able to respond effectively” to health or ecological threats from fish farms since “this supply chain of fish production and consumption has acquired the character of a global flow” (p. 182). A more nuanced set of evaluative criteria might also offer the analytical tools necessary for a fuller evaluation of the merits and limits of eco-labels, which are endorsed as a promising strategy, based largely on this theoretical distinction. Nonetheless, this engaging study offers an important analysis of the challenges posed by the globalization of food production and consumption, and should therefore be of interest to scholars with interests in global regulatory innovation.

Pellow, David Naguib. 2007 *Resisting Global Toxics: Transnational Movements for Environmental Justice*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

*Reviewed by Rachel Bergstein and Armin Rosencranz
University of Maryland, College Park*

In *Resisting Global Toxics: Transnational Movements for Environmental Justice*, “transnational” is the operative word. David Naguib Pellow argues that in an increasingly globalized world influenced by corporate and state actors that enforce hierarchies of race, class and nationality, the Global South is the steady victim of transnational environmental injustice. Hand-in-hand with this transnational inequality, however, a growing movement of environmental justice activists connects across national borders to resist these injustices, “produc[ing] new spaces for the articulation of global citizenship” (p. 55).

Specifically, Pellow examines the global waste trade through the lens of three theories. These theories are ecological modernization, wherein “the design, performance, and evaluation of production processes have been increasingly based on ecological criteria rather than simply being rooted in narrow economic calculus” (p. 18); Allan Schnaiberg’s treadmill of production theory, in which capitalism depends on unending, constant economic growth that prioritizes use of natural resources for their market value; and Ulrich Beck’s “risk society” thesis, which equates modernity with ecologically harmful practices. Pellow argues that ecological modernization in the Global North is only possible because of extensive environmental damage and cheap labor in the Global South. From the vantage point of the Global North it may look like corporations are becoming more environmentally responsible, when in fact they are shifting hazardous production and waste disposal practices along the “path of least resistance” (p. 13) to communities in the Global South disadvantaged in terms of race, class, and nationality.

Pellow’s concept of the “political economic opportunity structure” is an important contribution to the study of environmental justice. The concept refers to the structure of the state and the systems of alliances and opposition fac-

ing social movement actors in their efforts to achieve social change. Activists find and exploit opportunities, such as an elected representative sympathetic to the cause, or internal divisions among state officials, in order to engage the state in social change. Pellow extends this model to include the private sector, because of the growth of non-state actors such as international development banks and transnational corporations over the past 50 years. Social movement activists are now just as likely, or perhaps even more likely, to target their efforts towards undermining corporate power as they are to resisting state power, exploiting the political economic opportunity structure to achieve their aims.

Because the distribution of environmental hazards occurs across national borders, local social movement activists may be unable to challenge authorities in their own communities, and must build transnational networks to challenge both state and non-state actors in the fight for environmental justice. Pellow uses case studies from struggles against global trade in toxic trash, pesticides, and electronic waste to demonstrate instances of environmental injustice and how transnational environmental justice activists have exploited the political economic opportunity structure. In one example, activists in Mozambique worked together with Danish Greenpeace activists to protest a toxic pesticide incinerator that a Danish international development agency, Danida, built in Mozambique's capital. Pellow contends that this type of struggle lends itself to "redefining transnational politics and the transnational public sphere" (p. 63).

Pellow also singles out corporations in other aspects of environmental injustice. He considers the exploitation of nature and the exploitation of people to be part of the same process, and observes that as transnational corporations grow in size and influence, they maintain, exploit, and in some cases even deepen existing structures of racial and class domination. He believes that corporations are "the most powerful institutional force" (p. 232) in the modern world. Pellow introduces a more holistic view of corporate responsibility that includes the entire life cycle of a product from natural resource extraction to production to disposal. He implies that corporate actors must be responsible for their environmental impacts throughout all stages of this cycle, including the disposal of waste in a globally ethical and environmentally benign manner. These ideas are notable not because corporate abuse is a new topic, but because of the emerging transnational character of the struggles involved.

Pellow's argument suggests that it is impossible to view environmental justice as a local phenomenon. He notes that, "when transnational environmental justice activists succeed in defending one community from the scourge of environmental injustice, this is just the first of many steps in the process of seeking environmental justice, when for local and national movements it is often the only goal" (p. 236). Struggles for local environmental regulation or justice in the Global North that do not engage the political economic opportunity structure sufficiently to produce structural changes may result in corporate and state actors shifting environmental degradation to poor communities of color in the Global South.

This framework is useful for examining and analyzing the outcomes and unintended consequences of social movement activities. For instance, are recycling activists targeting Pepsi Cola in California really achieving their intended movement if the result of their efforts is that Pepsi increases plastics dumping in India? Even if their movement is so locally based that they are effectively achieving their goal by simply getting the plastics out of California, the increased pollution across the world is nevertheless a major unintended consequence of their activities. Overall, *Resisting Global Toxics* is an informative and thought-provoking discussion that contextualizes transnational environmental injustice within an increasingly globalized world.