
Reviewed by James Ortiz, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA 24061

The need to add another book to one’s own personal library is often an exercise in creative juggling, especially when the bookshelf is well beyond its capacity. Yet, I would make room for this one. This book represents a variety of viewpoints of sixteen authors, including its two editors, who focus on environmental management systems (EMSs). The definition of an EMS is “a formal set of policies and procedures that define how an organization will manage its potential impacts on the natural environment and on the health and welfare of the people.” EMSs create internal rules, change organizational structures, and direct resources that affect behaviors in order to help satisfy an organization’s environmental goals.

In Chapter 1, Coglianese and Nash state that the purpose of the book is “to bring (systemic empirical analysis) to bear in an effort to inform public policy decision-making about EMSs.” Furthermore, they argue that when firms regulate themselves “from the inside,” decision making rests at the institutional level that is most familiar about the processes, technologies, and resources needed to make improvements. Finally, they ask a bottom-line question: Under what conditions do EMSs yield environmental and economic gains?

The book is divided into two parts. Part I includes Chapters 2–5, and focuses on why firms choose to implement EMS, and the results these systems achieve. In Chapter 2, the authors note that the move toward greater integration of environmental concerns in the decision making of firms must be evaluated in terms of economic forces that drive and constrain business outcomes. They argue that voluntary initiatives will succeed only if the economic benefits are powerful enough to motivate and sustain economic commitments of firms. Therefore, understanding the relationship between EMS adoption and actual performance becomes extremely important.

In the third chapter, the authors suggest that managers implement EMSs within the context of their firm’s individual culture, strategic goals, and competitive position. Therefore, two firms can have the same type of EMS but end up with different results. Chapter 4 suggests that organizational resources tend to operate as systems, creating the capacity to respond to both internal opportunities and external events. There appears to be a strong correlation between EMS adoption and the generation of positive environmental and economic outcomes for the community, but the authors caution that further research needs to be done.

In Chapter 5, the authors note that when appropriately designed and implemented, EMSs promise to advance economic and environmental performance by making the individual firm, institutional, and country conditions, and then optimizing between standardization and flexibility. EMSs have the potential to deliver greater value than the status quo in the developing world. Two key lessons, therefore, emerge from Part I: (1) firms with strong EMSs tend to excel in multiple areas, and (2) a facility’s EMS should not be viewed in isolation, but as part of a larger set of management decisions. This helps in understanding an organization’s established commitments or leads to a fundamental rethinking of routines, core competencies, and external relationships.

Part II includes Chapters 6–9, and focuses on public policy implementation of EMSs. Its common themes are: (1) policymakers should be cautious about creating systems that reward firms solely for EMS adoption, and (2) managers can contribute to social value and promote sustainability without implementing an EMS.

Chapter 6 notes that most EMSs are adopted to address environmental problems, not the underlying social problems caused by human beings. Furthermore, trust is all-important in order for EMSs to succeed, and companies must tap into the concerns and expertise of their communities. The seventh chapter emphasizes that performance-focused, information-driven strategies for environmental protection depend on a robust information infrastructure. Therefore, it must deliver the information to users when and where they need it.

Chapter 8 examines policy options to encourage adoption of EMSs by firms. However, these options must be assessed according to the impact the EMS will have on firms’ incentives to achieve environmental improvements, administrative feasibility, and legal and political acceptability. In the ninth chapter, the authors note that EMSs offer no quick fix, and that we are only beginning to understand performance-based indicators. They argue that determining the improvements attributable to EMSs is only half of the problem. Poli-
cymakers need to ask what kinds of benefits should be offered to firms that implement EMSs; these are political questions.

In the concluding chapter, Coglianese and Nash suggest that both private and public sectors are increasingly looking at EMSs as the central core of their environmental programs. However, the presence of an EMS may not necessarily be an ideal measure of environmental performance for a firm. Existing research cannot directly correlate EMS implementation and environmental improvement. They ask a critical question: Does implementation of an EMS cause environmental performance to improve? Their answer: It depends. They call for more research concerning EMSs, and suggest future research strategies. They note that “...at best such systems can play an important, but complementary, role in public environmental policy.”

The book is organized in a reasonably logical fashion and the chapters are written in a concise and informative way, which is no easy task in a multi-authored text. The notes and references in the respective chapters were both timely and useful, and the Web sites listed were accessible.

The book, however, is written more for the academicians than the practitioner. Also, the book would have benefited by further discussion on the implementation of EMSs in the public sector, especially by federal agencies. For example, from a public policy perspective, Executive Order 13148, “Greening the Government through Leadership in Environmental Management,” was issued under the Clinton Administration. What impact does this Executive Order carry in the current Bush Administration? A discussion about the Code of Environmental Management Principles (a collection of five broad principles) and underlying performance objectives designed by the US Environmental Protection Agency to assist agencies in moving toward responsible environmental management would have been useful.¹

The Code of Environmental Management Principles is supposedly designed to ensure environmental performance that is proactive, flexible, cost-effective, integrated, and sustainable. Furthermore, the larger federal departments and agencies such as the Department of Defense, Department of Energy, and the National Aeronautic and Space Administration, which have heavy industrial-type operations, have already implemented some form of EMS. However, other agencies that do not have heavy industrial-type operations, but do have significant environmental issues, have only begun.

The book fills a niche in this area of environmental policy. One would agree with the editors that it has framed future policy debate and suggested policy-relevant research in this area. Finally, it is a good resource to add to one’s personal library and is a needed text in the field, since EMSs will be with us for some time.

Note


Reviewed by Richard A. Hall, 1521 NE 97th Street, Seattle, WA 98115

Federal lands in the United States represent an immense public asset—673 million acres, the equivalent of over one million square miles. Yet this is only the residual of the original inventory of public lands held by the United States. Nearly two-thirds of the federal lands have been given away or sold to private individuals, land speculators, homesteaders, or railroad corporations, or were granted to the states.

By the late nineteenth century, the United States was preserving its land ownership and designating properties as national parks, forests, and special-purpose areas. Yet public ownership, public policy, and professional management have ultimately failed to prevent the massive extraction of assets from these lands in the form of minerals, timber, water, forage, and wildlife, creating substantial private wealth while inflicting damage to public resources and communities.

This criticism is forcefully expressed by author Richard W. Behan in Plundered Promise: Capitalism, Politics, and the Fate of the Federal Lands. Plundered Promise describes the changing historical, political, institutional, and economic conditions that have determined the fate of these lands over the past 200 years.

The foundation for federal lands policy is based in the structure of the United States government. Behan argues that the United States Constitution precludes a majoritarian democracy where the views of the majority of citizens can be expressed, accommodated, and implemented. Instead, the dispersion of power through various constitutional mechanisms and among the branches of federal government and the states prevents the interests of the majority from being addressed, and scatters accountability. Today,
Behan asserts, decision making for federal lands has become strongly centralized, influenced by powerful corporate interests and professional bureaucrats.

Plundered Promise is harshly critical of modern corporations, which Behan describes as “uncontrolled, uncontrollable, unaccountable, and lately transnational concentrations of economic and political power unprecedented in human history” (p. 83). In describing how public ownership has failed to adequately protect federal lands, he concludes that such corporations have realized that “you don’t have to own the land . . . to hijack the timber, forage, water, and minerals, to dump the external costs on society at large, and to be subsidized in the process” (p. 116).

Behan’s critique extends beyond the corporations and the influence they wield independently, through trade associations, or as members of political action committees in Washington, DC. He also faults the politicians and policy professionals in Washington, and even many of the large, Washington-based environmental organizations, for failed federal lands management. The environmental organizations, he contends, have relaxed their opposition to corporate commodity interests as a result of corporate donations to their organizations and the representation of corporate interests on their organizations’ boards.

In the final chapter of Plundered Promise, Behan argues for shifting the productive capacity of the federal lands away from the output of private goods to the provision of public services, where features such as scenic beauty, biodiversity, preservation of species, recreation, and maintenance of air and water quality are highly valued. He proposes ambitious, even revolutionary, solutions to what he describes as the pathologies in the political and economic systems that have ravaged federal lands.

Behan suggests the careful scrutiny and debate of proposals made by others for significant political and economic reform, including decentralizing production and economic decision making, and dispersing power away from Washington, DC; modifying the United States Constitution’s separation of powers; shifting the federal government more toward direct democracy; curbing the role of lobbies and interest groups; and confronting the power of multinational corporations. Behan calls for revocation of corporate charters when corporations benefit at the expense of the greater community—as he puts it, arguably more the rule today than the exception. In addition, he emphasizes the decentralization of federal lands management, where the Constitution’s mechanisms to keep citizens apart are turned back, and issues involving the use of national forests, parks, wild-

life refuges, grazing districts, and other federal lands are resolved at the local level by neighbors sharing common, as well as competing, interests.

Plundered Promise is an interesting and thought-provoking account of the fate of federal lands in the United States. Author Richard W. Behan’s critical observations and high-reaching solutions to the problems of federal land management are likely to spark controversy and debate among those with an interest in natural resource policy.

The Common Law and the Environment: Rethinking the Statutory Basis for Modern Environmental Law.


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The Political Economy Research Center (PERC), founded in 1980, is a non-profit organization that encourages the use of market principles to resolve environmental problems. Toward this end, PERC focuses on “free market environmentalism” emphasizing the use of property rights, private initiative, and voluntary activity as alternatives to certain government controls.

The Common Law and the Environment: Rethinking the Statutory Basis for Modern Environmental Law is a compilation of essays prepared in 1998 for the Political Economy Forum, an annual conference sponsored by PERC. The book examines the causes and consequence of the adoption of comprehensive federal statutes over the past three decades to address environmental problems in the United States. The lawyers, economists, and scientists contributing to this volume offer a variety of perspectives on environmental law, although they focus on the failures and disadvantages of federal statutory law in addressing environmental issues.

Fundamental legal systems in the United States rely upon two distinct institutions for solving problems: common law and statute law. Instead of determining the rights of polluters and those affected by pollution on a case-by-case basis through evolving common law, modern federal environmental statutes have largely displaced this institution, reallocating rights that affect broad segments of society. The authors suggest there are numerous adverse consequences resulting from the adoption of this statutory scheme at the expense of the common law system. These consequences
can include excessive regulatory complexity, inflexibility and lack of responsiveness to state and local concerns, reduced private sector competition, higher costs for pollution control, higher costs for goods and services, and reduced environmental quality.

The editors of *The Common Law and the Environment*, Roger E. Meiners and Andrew P. Morriss, acknowledge there are flaws with any human institution, including the common law as it is applied to environmental problems in the United States. However, they suggest the national regulatory approach to environmental management be reconsidered, reinvigorating the spirit of the common law to allow ordinary citizens a greater role in protecting the environment.


Reviewed by Joseph W. Dorsey, Assistant Professor, School of Interdisciplinary Studies, 106 Peabody Hall, Miami University, Oxford, OH 45056-1981

First of all, *Designing the Green Economy* is a very impressive book. It has the requisite breadth and depth that appeal to an academic, but is written in a style that is highly readable, comprehensive, and fairly conversational. Although the title suggests that the book is a “touchy-feely” economics lesson, it is much more than that. The book covers so many spheres of thought and academic disciplines that I was amazed by the author’s ability to integrate many diverse areas such as human geography, world history, social theory, ecosystem management, environmental science, development theory, social movement theory, political science, industrial ecology, feminist thought, and religion and spirituality, to name a few, into an easily understandable version of interdisciplinary economics. Even the economic focus of the book can be separated into discussions specific to labor economics, ecological economics, environmental economics, home economics, agricultural economics, resource economics, macroeconomics, microeconomics, and of course, the history of economics.

Still, *Designing the Green Economy* feels more like a history book partnered with a handbook for redesigning society rather than a book about economics and the environment, for it investigates and reveals the waves of progress and development caused by human social and cultural endeavors over the ages. The book illuminates the societal problems that “civilization” has caused humanity, and the environmental degradation economic growth has inflicted upon the natural world, as well. Fortunately, Milani offers ambitious but practical solutions to anyone willing to implement them.

The book is divided into two parts. Part 1 is called “Beyond Materialism: The Post-Industrial Redefinition of Wealth.” In this section, the author describes how the historical materialism of capitalistic wealth accumulation, while liberating people from nature’s domination over human survival, created a social/economic system called “industrialization” that eventually modified, exploited, damaged, and destroyed natural systems in the name of human progress. This part of the book introduces the reader to reified economic concepts such as the Divided Economy, Casino Capitalism, Debt Economy, Cog-Labor Markets, Waste Economy, Military Keynesianism, Synthetic Economy, Carbo-hydrate Economy, Paper Economy, and the Megabyte Economy.

Part 2 is called “Designing the Green Economy”; this is where the author puts forth a myriad of solutions to the social, political, economic, environmental, and spiritual problems created by industrialized capitalism, Marxism, Fordism, Reaganism, corporate globalization, and any other “ism” that has limited the human spirit or harmed global ecosystems in the process. This section provides many innovative ideas and concepts that sound great in theory, but would need massive shifts in paradigmatic thinking to be implemented at all levels of society in the coming decades.

While both sections of the book are well written and insightful, I am particularly impressed by the information in the first half of the book. Milani’s historical account and synthesis of the rise and fall of money, the division of labor and class, the role of gender and work, the Great Depression and the New Deal, Taylorism and Fordism, Keynesianism and Speculation, the auto/suburban complex, and the “new ecology of politics” were discussions greatly appreciated by a non-economist like myself. I was able to see the history of human events in linear time, but also consider the cyclical relationship between humans and nature, and human nature.

The author often reminds the reader that our human drive to alter our environment for our desires has been transformed into mechanisms of domination and exploitation, and sectors of mass production, mass consumption, and
massive waste generation. At the same time, he manages to remain optimistic that human consciousness is evolving and can become more balanced and holistic if we are willing to change ourselves from within as a species. Milani stresses in the book that while the human enterprise is, at times, socially alienating, resource wasteful, and ecologically destructive, it is not too late to design social systems that put end use, use-value, and regenerative values first.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of Designing the Green Economy is its message of hope for the world of the future—one that is post-industrial, post-Fordist, post-capitalist, post-materialist, and post-expansionist. The author envisions a society that has evolved beyond “money as an end unto itself” and beyond where the environment is only seen as raw material for our “destructive impulses.” He believes that dominance-based civilization can no longer survive, because it now threatens humanity’s own survival. Both he and I agree that an important key to developing more balanced and regenerative forms of social organization is to focus on community. With community as the starting point of this socio-economic and political transformation, the green perspective will be one of linking scale between levels of community, from neighborhood to planet. Milani suggests “this linking of relationships between different levels is possible only because these are relations between wholes, that is, between levels of relative self-reliance.”

In the concluding chapters, there are many recommendations for how “communities” can build such self-reliance through ecological design and green service economics such as community kitchens and eating areas, common green space, semi-private outdoor rooms, shared child care facilities and laundry services, and community and rooftop gardens; soft energy paths such as renewable energy sources and cogeneration; the decentralization of manufacturing into home-based shops and more small-scale, localized, and craft-based work; and to reduce the movement of matter and increase movement of ideas and information.

The author thinks that one of the most important economic activities in the green economy is to sustain and maintain soil, vegetation, and natural drainage, and wind and precipitation patterns, because these resources and processes determine the kind and quality of human economic activity that will be viable in the future. The concept “eco-structure” pertains to ecological engineering to augment the self-design of natural flows, or perhaps mimic these flows to harmonize infrastructures for energy, transportation, and water services. Another concept, “eco-infrastructure,” includes nature in the design and planning process so that the notion of infrastructure is extended to food production, the use of raw materials, and even provisions for wildlife.

I found Designing the Green Economy to be an informative, provocative, and refreshing read. I would recommend it as an essential book for those interested in a deeper understanding of the history of economic progress and how it affects contemporary society and the environment. It is also a book of theoretical possibilities and practical solutions. One cannot finish this book without a better knowledge of how we evolved into the market-driven, international, monetary society we see today, and what we can do to become the “disaccumulationist,” eco-logical, global community that we need to be.


Reviewed by Robert V. Bartlett, Department of Political Science, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 47907

Several big ideas have gained currency in environmental theorizing and practice in the last decade. One is that effective environmental policy must reinforce and derive from participatory democracy. Others are that it also must engage local civil society, be oriented toward achieving sustainability, be preventative, and be integrated with economic development. These are not new ideas. All can be traced back decades, but together they have been overshadowed by the wave of state, national, and international bureaucratic, legalistic, scientific, and technological efforts that have constituted environmental policy development since the late 1960s. Concurrently, there have been local and regional experiments in environmental protection—non-governmental, intergovernmental, and transgovernmental. Whether or not these experiments multiplied in the 1990s, scholars began to turn increasing attention to some heretofore intractable aspects of the environmental problematique. These aspects included the fragmentation of environmental policy itself, the link between environmental quality and social justice, inflexible and cumbersome bureaucratic regulation, the limited applicability and effectiveness of market incentives, the inability of traditional approaches to affect the causes rather than just the symptoms of environmental degradation, and the lack of support from ordinary
citizens for environmental measures requiring significant personal sacrifice. Recent years have seen more of these local and regional experiments framed by ideas of sustainability, ecosystem management, and civic environmentalism.

William Shutkin is not alone in seeing this experimenting as the dawning of a new era for environmentalism. He argues that America is facing a crisis of both its environment and its democracy. “Part and parcel of this diminution of civic spirit and rise in economic and social inequality has been the deterioration of the American environment, both built and undeveloped” (p. 3). The solution, according to Shutkin, is community action—planning and organizing activities that improve the environment where Americans live and work. This environmentally-oriented civic engagement embraces six core ideas to ensure the quality and sustainability of communities: meaningful and informed participation, community and regional planning, environmental education, industrial ecology, environmental justice, and commitment to place.

*The Land That Could Be* consists of two main parts. Chapters 1–3 describe and advocate civic environmentalism. Chapter 1 surveys the historical and philosophical ties between environmentalism and civic life in the United States, characterizing the civic health of the country as declining. Chapter 2 summarizes the negative consequences of civic decline on environmental quality. Chapter 3 is a critique of the American environmental movement to date and a restatement of the argument that civic environmentalism is an emergent paradigm that offers a solution to democratic and policy deficiencies. Chapters 4–7 consist of four case studies of civic environmentalism initiatives in Boston, suburban New Jersey, Oakland, and Routt County, Colorado.

The organizational scheme is a bit problematic. The book would be strengthened if the cases preceded the descriptions and advocacy chapters, which then could refer to the cases for limited empirical support of some of the sweeping claims made. The case studies are worth reading, particularly for professionals assisting or interacting with civic environmentalism initiatives. But readers will need to supply their own hard-headed analysis. Shutkin tends to portray all circumstances. Likewise, Shutkin’s exploration of the idea of civic environmentalism is readable but ultimately unsatisfying. Nowhere in the book is Shutkin’s vision of civic environmentalism placed in the context of the rich experiences on these issues outside the United States, nor of the thinking and writing done about them. Counterarguments and counterevidence are not confronted, and conclusions are drawn from minimal evidence. He relies on a recitation of what others have said and done without supplying much in the way of anything new, provocative, or substantively insightful.

Overall, the book is mildly disappointing and of only limited significance to environmental professionals and their practices. Again, Shutkin is not alone in writing about democracy, environmentalism, sustainability, and civic politics. Other books are going to be more fruitful for the continuing education of environmental professionals.


Reviewed by Craig S. Strobel, Director, ConSpiritu, PO Box 733, Heppner, OR 97836

David Kidner’s book *Nature and Psyche: Radical Environmentalism and the Politics of Subjectivity* does for environmental theory what Edward Said’s book *Orientalism* did for post-colonial cultural criticism: it lays open the belly of the industrialist beast and shows how pervasive the assumptions of industrialism are in contemporary psychological theory and practice, as well as in academic discourse and environmental practice.

Kidner, who is Senior Lecturer in Psychology in the Humanities and Communication Studies Programmes at Nottingham Trent University, does this in his book by first claiming that “the critique of industrialism by the Green movement is doomed to failure because the psychological, social and epistemological foundations of the green movement’s critique . . . are often the same foundations on which industrialism itself is built” (p. 2). The book proceeds in an orderly fashion to interrogate each of the aforementioned foundations. According to Kidner, what is needed is a standpoint outside the universe of industrialism, but the question is how to envision something outside of the hegemony exerted by the linguistic and conceptual realm of industrialism.

Kidner looks at how industrialism reconfigures and replaces the natural world as the accepted basis for all life. It does this by defining human subjectivity as being separate and distinct from the natural world—in fact, making “human” and “nature” separate, even opposing categories. Industri-
amentalism is also characterized by an unwillingness to accord subjectivity to nature. There is a simultaneous transformation of the physical landscape and human person into the autonomous individual, separate and distinct from the natural world in which it is situated. However, Kidner does not argue simply for a “return to nature.” A reconfiguration of selfhood as integrated within nature is necessary. But how to reconfigure human selfhood and (re)integrate it within nature? That is the question.

Contemporary psychology is unable to do this reintegrating because its method of interpreting data is structured in such a way as to reinforce and reproduce the assumptions upon which industrialist culture is built. In other words, Kidner argues that contemporary psychology has emerged as a way for industrialism to shift the focus upon the variety of psychological malaises that riddle industrialized society away from industrialism itself, and onto the separate and autonomous individual—a separation that has been effected by industrialism, and that is responsible for the malaises in the first place. Industrialism does this by positing the autonomous self (autonomous from nature and human culture, that is), which serves as the epistemological foundation upon which psychology, academic discourse, and the whole of industrial culture is built.

The line of thinking that emerges from this is familiar: If I am separate from the natural world around me, I can freely use it for my own ends. Whatever happens to the natural world does not affect me because we are separate entities. Psychology reinforces this position by attempting to reconfigure me within a particular model of society that is predicated upon the autonomous self. If I experience feelings for nature or places within nature or other species within nature, and those feelings produce conflicts within me, especially in regard to the destruction of the environment or the extinction of species, then psychology seeks to “make me well” by reasserting my autonomy and reestablishing my place within a social world whose boundaries have been defined by industrialist presumptions.

For Kidner, individualism is a problem, but not individuality. What is needed is a balance of autonomy and cooperation, which amounts to an integration of the individual into the whole. Industrialism reduces the individual into an entity divorced from the “outside world,” and reduces the world to a pile of “raw materials” to be consumed and manipulated by the autonomous individual. But it is wrong to propose relaxing the boundaries between self and world. What is needed is an integrative structure. That integrative structure is culture.

Taking his cue from Clifford Geertz, Kidner argues that culture contributes to our sense of identity, our ability to live purposefully, and the meaningfulness of our existence. Culture offers us a sort of symbolic integration of the cosmos, connecting us to what is outside us and so affirming our membership in a scheme much greater than any individual or society. Culture can serve to reintegrate human beings back into the natural world insofar as it takes heed of the interplay between consciousness and unconsciousness, and recognizes the symbolic resonance between the natural world and the forms and feelings which make up the unconscious.

We must hold on to the long-term aim of reintegrating humanity fully into nature, even when current social, political, and demographic conditions make the realization entirely impractical at the moment. If we lose sight of this ultimate aim, then we are accepting some of the most basic assumptions of industrialism—for example, that humanity is necessarily destructive to nature, and that nature is something that is outside of ourselves. In contrast, a theory which insists on and expresses the membership of humanity within the symbolic community of nature, so furthering the resonance between our own wildness and that of the rest of the world, will reinforce the wholeness of nature, and so will avoid extending those splits between what is “wild” and what is “civilized” that unwittingly express a technocratic system of categorization. (p. 267)

Kidner does not offer any real plan of action as to how one might effect this “regeneration of culture.” His book’s chief usefulness is in offering a critique of the assumptions made in any sort of environmental work, be it restorative, preservationist, radical, conservative, deep or shallow ecology. Those who are academics concerned with environmental issues will find the book a useful foil to test their own assumptions about the environment and human society. Those who are engaged in the preservation of wild spaces will be challenged to think deeply about the meanings of wild and human. Those who argue for biocentric egalitarianism will be challenged to think about the complexity of difference and identity in natural systems, and the ecological place that human culture occupies. Those who utilize scientific research methodologies in their environmental practice will confront the issues of industrialism’s hegemony in science head-on. In short, there is something for everyone to think about in this book, and I highly recommend it as a means for expanding any sort of environmental work into the realm of human culture.