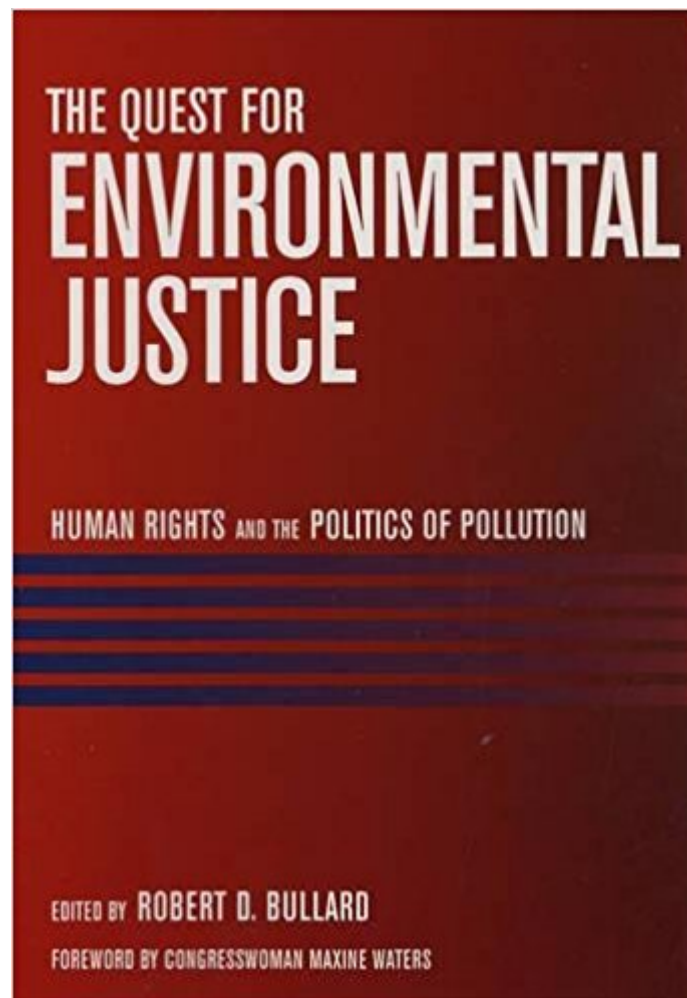




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# **The Quest For Environmental Justice: Human Rights And The Politics Of Pollution**



## Synopsis

This much anticipated follow-up to Dr. Robert D. Bullard's highly acclaimed *Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice and Communities of Color* captures the voices of frontline warriors who are battling environmental injustice and human rights abuses at the grassroots level around the world, and challenging government and industry policies and globalization trends that place people of color and the poor at special risk. Part I presents an overview of the early environmental justice movement and highlights key leadership roles assumed by women activists. Part II examines the lives of people living in "sacrifice zones" and "toxic corridors" (such as Louisiana's infamous "Cancer Alley") where high concentrations of polluting industries are found. Part III explores land use, land rights, resource extraction, and sustainable development conflicts, including Chicano struggles in America's Southwest. Part IV examines human rights and global justice issues, including an analysis of South Africa's legacy of environmental racism and the corruption and continuing violence plaguing the oil-rich Niger Delta. Together, the diverse contributors to this much-anticipated follow-up anthology present an inspiring and illuminating picture of the environmental justice movement in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Bullard offers a disturbing account of the environmental and human cost of the excesses of capitalism in this follow-up to *Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice and Communities of Color*. This volume takes a fresh look at the often unequal distribution of environmental hazards to poor

and minority communities, examining locations from Louisiana's "Cancer Alley" to Nigeria. In part one, women activists detail their gutsy battles against the combined power of business and government when their minority neighborhoods were threatened by industrial pollution. Part two tells the stories of people (again, mostly minorities and the poor) living in "sacrifice zones," such as Cancer Alleyâ "the stretch down the Mississippi River in Louisiana where "approximately 80 percent of the total African American community in the nine parishes lives within three miles of a polluting facility." Parts three and four examine Chicano struggles in the Southwest and global justice issues, including "corrupt... petro-capitalism" in Nigeria, where deep poverty persists despite the country's oil wealth. Readers can learn much about those who pay the costs in safety and health for many of modern life's conveniences. (Oct.) Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"A refreshing and timely overview of contemporary environmental justice struggles and the fight against environmental racism around the nation and indeed the world."--Congresswoman Maxine Waters "Robert Bullard and his colleagues have made a crucial link between the global movement for environmental justice and the international human rights movement. It is difficult to overstate the importance of this work for the millions of people across the planet who are struggling against both environmental injustices and human rights abuses. The contributors to this volume present a powerful framework for moving forward to a state of the world that is socially just and ecologically sustainable."--David Naguib Pellow, author of *Garbage Wars: The Struggle for Environmental Justice in Chicago*"Robert Bullard, whose scholarship created a whole field of study, continues to expand on our understanding of the environmental justice movement. In *The Quest for Environmental Justice*, Dr. Bullard has assembled a group of experts dedicated to eradicating the injustices suffered by people of color, indigenous peoples, and the poor. This volume presents more than 'the empirical evidence'; its focus is on the day-to-day struggles of those engaged in the environmental justice movement. It demonstrates our hopes and victories, our frustrations and defeats, our commitment to basic human rights and social justice."--David E. Camacho, Ph.D., Professor of Political Science and editor of *Environmental Injustices, Political Struggles: Race, Class, and the Environment*"Bob Bullard has done it again: this latest compilation is a fresh, critical approach to the environmental justice field, reflecting the maturation of the movement and its scholars. It breaks new ground by seamlessly weaving in international environmental justice perspectives, with discussions of Columbia, the Philippines, and Nigeria as well as dozens of communities across the United States. Beyond being a compelling read--which it is--it is also a

crucial reference work that collects key environmental justice data that will be useful for years to come. If you read one book on environmental justice this year, this is the one to read."--Luke Cole, Director, Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment

The Quest for Environmental Justice is an interesting collection of essays that highlight several case studies of activism with a predominant USA angle to them. Edited under the supervision of Dr. Bullard the book falls short of offering a strong underpinning to the environmental justice thinking and challenges, to instead concentrate on examples of abuses, and community actions. Additional debate and analysis around the challenges facing environmental justice, and social equity, and the different currents of policy affecting it would have made a more interesting collection. The book feels like an addendum to other volumes by Bullard that are far more focused. Here after a generic if solvent highlight of where environmental justice is at as a movement, he jumps to stress the importance of it for color communities, which while an essential part of the issue, feels somewhat unstructure as if one were working on the assumption that the preceding work of Bullard is know by the reader, and leaving a hint of excluding flavor when one takes a global perspective. It is true that the work around environmental justice and African American communities in the USA is probably the most important contributions of Bullard, but here it feels like a drag for a volume that would have seem to aspire embracing other communities and a broader outlook. Fortunately some of the contributions explore case studies affecting other communities and a couple venture to narrate struggles outside the USA. A few of those essays do offer a very insightful analysis of environmental justice challenges and there resides the strenght of the volume. However, for a broader, more comprehensive an incisive work on environmental justice, instead of a collection of case studies one would need to go elsewhere.

The book is neat and also in good shape. It served its purpose.

"The Quest for Environmental Justice" by Robert D. Bullard (editor) is an excellent primer about the environmental justice ('E.J.') movement. Blending U.S. environmental and social justice activists together in the late 1970s, the E.J. movement has grown to become a significant multinational political force. The numerous authors who have contributed to this volume explore the movement's rich history and chronicle many of the noteworthy struggles that have improved the lives of many people and can provide inspiration and hope to us all. The introductory chapters include a Foreword by Congresswoman Maxine Waters, who played an important role in a campaign that successfully

relocated the largely African-American community of Norco, LA away from a highly polluting oil refinery; a Preface by Peggy Morrow Shepard, who believes that the E.J. movement is key to reinvigorating the mainstream environmental organizations; and an Introduction by Mr. Bullard, who recounts how some of the core principles of the E.J. movement were institutionalized at the EPA during the Clinton administration. The book is divided into four sections. The first section, "A Legacy of Injustice" discusses the history of the E.J. movement. "Environmental Justice in the Twenty-first Century" by Mr. Bullard compares and contrasts the Summit I and Summit II meetings to discuss both the growth of the movement and how its organizational tactics and principles have developed over time. "Neighborhoods 'Zoned' for Garbage" by Mr. Bullard drills into the author's personal experiences fighting zoning decisions in Houston, TX that first brought the fledgling E.J. movement to prominence. "Women Warriors of Color on the Front Line" by Mr. Bullard and Damu Smith offers a series of vignettes written by seven exceptional women who have led community-based campaigns to victory, often against formidable and well-financed corporate opponents. The second section is about "The Assault on Fence-Line Communities". Beverly Wright's "Living and Dying in Louisiana's 'Cancer Alley'" connects the legacy of slavery and racism with environmental exploitation and relates the successes of historic African-American towns such as Convent, LA in achieving a small measure of justice for its citizens against a large Japanese multinational corporation. Manuel Pastor, Jr. et al's "Environmental Inequity in Metropolitan Los Angeles" documents the myriad ill health effects that are produced by the disproportionate siting of hazardous sites in minority neighborhoods. Olga Pomar's "Toxic Racism on a New Jersey Waterfront" discusses the legacy of industrial pollution in Camden, NJ and the importance of developing legal tools that communities might use to more effectively petition government to secure their rights. The third section is on the topic of "Land Rights and Sustainable Development". "Anatomy of the Urban Parks Movement" by Robert Garcia and Erica Flores explores the unequal distribution of parkland in the Los Angeles metropolitan area and the Latino community's struggle to create an inner city park at an area known as the Cornfields. "Resource Wars Against Native Peoples" by Al Gedicks weaves together the experiences of native peoples in Columbia, Ecuador and the U.S. who are resisting the sacrifice of their lands in the name of unsustainable consumption. "Tierra y Vida" by Devon Pena documents the Chicano experience in the southwestern U.S. including struggles with powerful mining, agriculture, waste disposal, real estate and water interests that have long exploited labor and land for profit. The fourth section is "Human Rights and Global Justice". Robin Morris Collin and Robert Collin's "Environmental Reparations" calls for mainstream environmental organizations to create a more inclusive environmental movement by acknowledging the interconnectedness of rural

and urban ecosystems and to fight for E.J. reparations in minority communities. Deborah Berman Santana's "Vieques" is an inspiring account of resistance by the Puerto Rican people and their struggle to create a sustainable local economy. Oronoto Douglas et al's "Alienation and Militancy in the Niger Delta" details the abysmal situation that has been created in Nigeria by the confluence of oil money and government corruption but suggests ways that might prove helpful in ending the violence and nurturing a responsible form of democracy to take root. David McDonald's "Environmental Racism and Neoliberal Disorder in South Africa" offers perhaps the book's most insightful analytical work by demonstrating how white overaccumulation and black deprivation in South Africa may explain why neoliberalism has supplanted the apartheid system as the primary means by which the privileged class has maintained its claim on scarce environmental resources. Mr. Bullard et al's "Addressing Global Poverty, Pollution and Human Rights" provides a succinct and impassioned case for addressing inequities based on race, sex and class in order to create a sustainable global community for all to share. I highly recommend this cogently written and empowering book to everyone.

I originally just bought this book since I needed it for this one class i was taking. I ended up liking this book. Really opened my eyes to many injustices that happen in the city. This is true especially to minorities. To all those active in the civil rights movement, this should be part of the collection.

100% perfect!!

Very informative. The book teaches the material in a manner that can be understood effectively. I learned a lot of important factors about environmental injustices.

Bullard, et al. have good intentions in that they want to correct environmental injustice and racism. However, sometimes they are too quick to call racism or get bogged down in statistics. My favorite chapter was the one on the Vieques people of Puerto Rico. If anything, I learned a lot about world politics.

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