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Book Review

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Book Review

Erratum

The citation for this review is 4 *RISK* 357 (1993) in most commercial databases.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS: PUBLIC COSTS, PRIVATE REWARDS. (Michael S. Greve & Fred L. Smith, Jr. eds., Praeger 1992) [209 pp.] Acknowledgements, biographical information, figures, foreword by James Q. Wilson, index, notes, selected bibliography, tables. LC 91-44009, ISBN 0-275-94238-4. [Paper \$19.95, cloth \$45.00. One Madison Avenue, New York N.Y. 10010.]

ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS is said to be written with the goal of inspiring a realistic debate on governmental capacity to procure public environmental benefits. It begins with an introduction by Greve entitled "Environmental Politics without Romance" and ends with a conclusion by Smith entitled "Environmental Policy at the Crossroads."

In the foreword, Wilson states:¹

I commend this volume to the reader, not because I hate environmentalism and wish to see it derailed, but because true environmentalism has already been derailed by mindless or mischievous policies that claim, wrongly, to serve the environment. This book contains several compelling examples of why good intentions are good enough and how environmental slogans have turned into private gain.

Thus, the remaining seven chapters represent case studies where a purported environmental rationale fronts for benefits conferred on favored constituencies. Although they are tied together by the common theme that environmental regulation can be used and abused for political and economic objectives having little or nothing to do with the environment, they may also be divided into three subgroups.

The first three studies examine coalitions between environmental advocacy organizations and industrial groups. Chapters 2-4 are, respectively, essays on the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, the Bovine Somatotropin controversy, and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, (i.e. CERCLA or Superfund). The second subgroup consists of two essays analyzing the interplay between interest groups and regulators in the institutional arena and focus on pollution control deadlines and environmental citizenship suits. Finally, two essays examine

¹ At ix.

international environmental regulation in the context of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, and American Trade Policy.

Shep Melnick observes in chapter 5: "Cynicism in private can be comic, but the spread of public cynicism can be tragic."² Thus, I found this book disconcerting and wonder if the authors were unable to locate examples where the purpose and effect of environmental statutes or regulations were not somehow perverted. Perhaps it is necessary to foster cynicism to promote debate. If so, this text is well suited to that end.

Gianna Julian-Arnold[†]

² At 100. Although this part of the article was originally published in 1983, at 102, in an epilog written in 1991, he concludes:

Surely, before long Jay Leno will intervene, and criticism will become ridicule. Members of Congress will condemn EPA, EPA will search for loopholes, and many years later Congress will rewrite the Act — once again.

[†] Ms. Julian-Arnold received a B.S. (Chemistry) from Northern Arizona University and a J.D. and M.I.P. from FPLC, where she was an Intellectual Property Research Fellow and editorial assistant for RISK.