

Conceptualising Environmental Citizenship – A Green Republican Version

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Setting out.....

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'Sustainability' or 'green citizenship' – includes but goes beyond environmental, ecological, nature, pollution, resource concerns

Addresses the non-ecological dimensions of unsustainability such as inequality, injustice, lack of democratic accountability, economic

So includes but goes beyond 'environmental citizenship'

Or 'environmental citizenship' is (re)defined to include these non-environmental causes and consequences of 'actually existing unsustainability' (Barry, 2012)

Reason I prefer 'green' politics, political economy, political theory – rather than 'environmental' politics etc.

Also, while it includes 'pro-environmental behaviour change' (individual agency), also addresses issues of economic, political, social structural dimensions of unsustainability and sustainability.

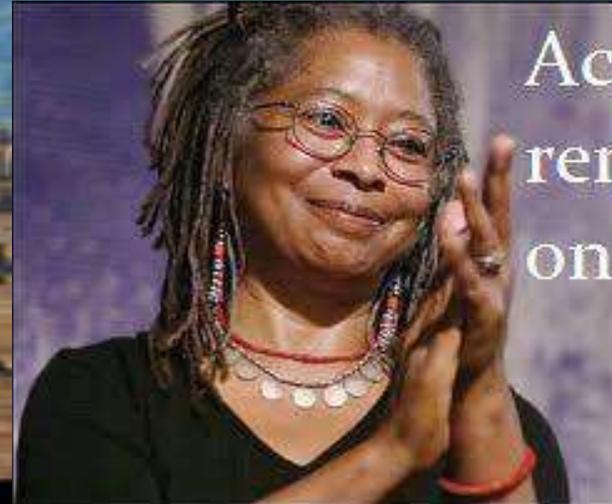
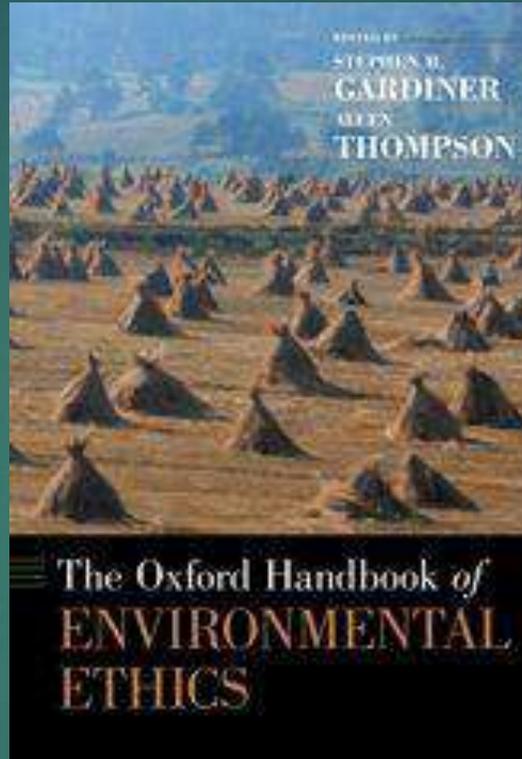
Green republican citizenship

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CHAPTER 28

CITIZENSHIP AND (UN)
SUSTAINABILITY
A Green Republican Perspective

JOHN BARRY



Activism is my
rent for living
on this planet.
-Alice
Walker

From 'tax payers' and 'voters' to 'active citizens'

From liberal democratic 'dependent clientelism' to critical political agents

Concern with the common good, public deliberation

Green republican citizenship

Frames the challenge of unsustainability as meaning to live in a different type of society –

“Not the same society with low- carbon light bulbs or more recycling, i.e. an environmentally sustainable and resource efficient capitalism with unequal power relations, socioeconomic inequalities, and so forth still intact” (Barry, 2015: 336).

Essential features of a green republican citizenship - politically transformative and transgressive, radical and emancipatory- critical.

‘Radical’ in sense of ‘getting to the root’, dealing with causes not just consequences of unsustainability

Citizenship, co-dependency and creativity

Green citizenship as one way to structure and acknowledge our co-dependence on one another and on the more than human world.

Acknowledgment of the status and identity of citizenship as bestowing dignity upon individuals in their expression of autonomy as free moral and politically creative and imaginative agents.

This creative capacity for choice is a constituent element of citizenship— to see that the transition from unsustainability is not some automatic transmission mechanism but a creative, political- ethical choice to live in a different type of society.

Example of green republican citizenship

– ‘compulsory sustainability service’

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Requirement of all citizens to do their ‘fair share’ of the work required to achieve sustainable development (social, economic, environmental)

Equal citizenship and the creation and sustaining of a healthy democratic community requires all citizens undertake an equal share of the gruelling work that makes society function (Walzer, 1983).

The distribution of work in all its forms (i.e., not just formally paid “employment” but also unwaged and informal/ community or domestic work, including gendered reproductive labour or political work in being an active citizen) is of central concern for green politics.

“A free society often makes claims on its people, from compulsory schooling to paying taxes and defending the nation in a time of peril. Civic service can be just such a legitimate demand” (Crabtree and Field, 2009).

Resistance and contestation

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Green citizenship – such as sustainability service – not simply about compliance with state-backed compulsory practices/work

But also non-violent resistance and contestation against the state and causes or underlying structural features of unsustainability

Based on republican conception of politics and the political as based on non-violent disagreement, robust deliberation and debate

The transformation of interests and views and not simply their aggregation (liberal democracy)

Example of active, contestatory
green republican citizenship

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The fossil fuel divestment movement

WE ARE ARMED ... ONLY WITH PEER-REVIEWED SCIENCE



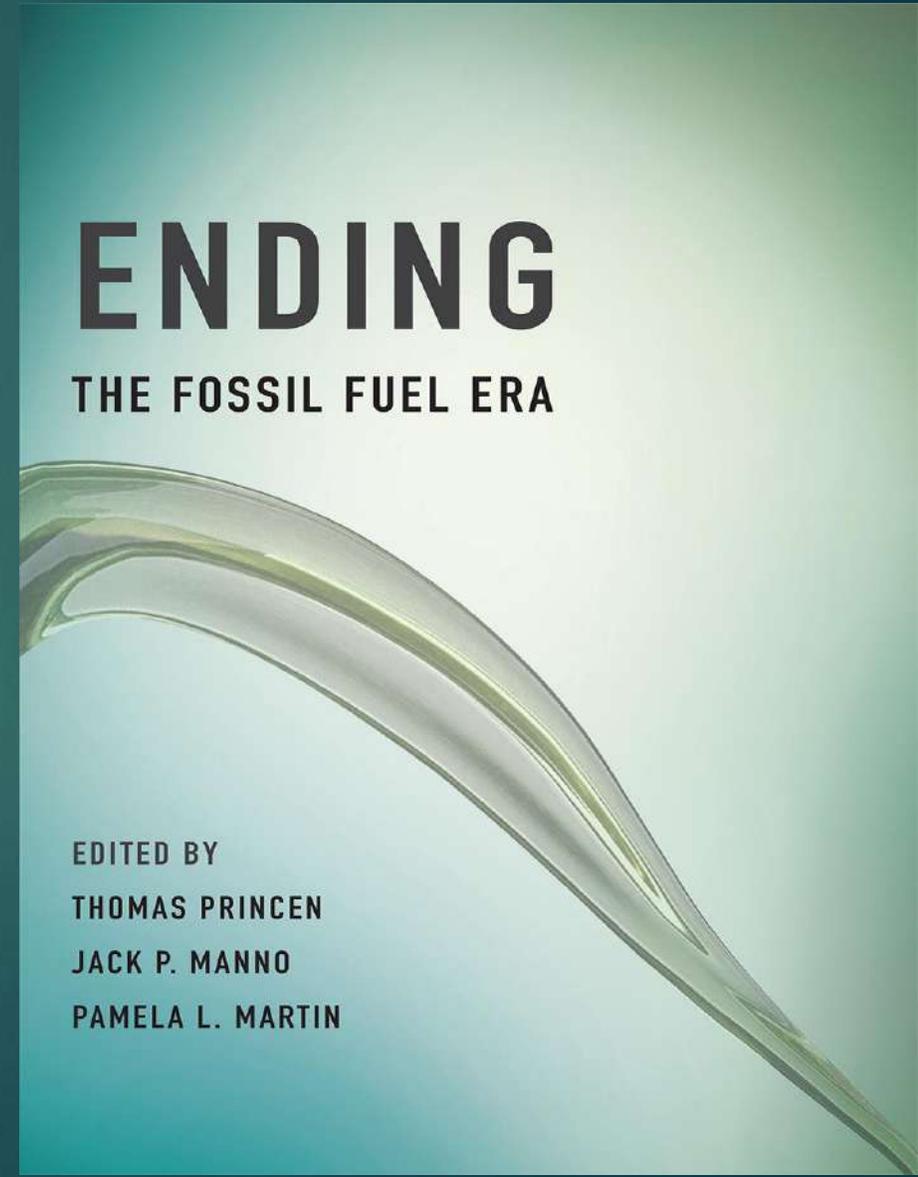
Delegitimising and Destablising Fossil Fuels

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“We need to leave oil before oil leaves us”
Fatid Biriol, Chief Economist, International
Energy Agency

From extraction to burning/use – carbon
results in social, economic and
environmental problems

Divestment movement – citizenship action to
drive forward the transition away from fossil
fuel energy



Oil wars....

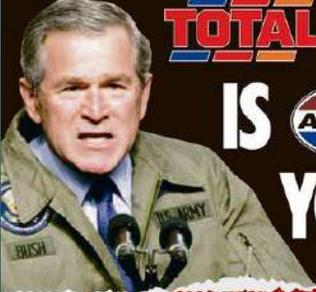


Monday January 6 2003
DAILY Mirror
NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 20p

TOON GLOOM
Shearer's FA Cup shock
SEE SPORT

I  NOT  ERATE
SADDAM HUSSEIN FROM
BLAME. I WILL  ISE
OUR TROOPS AND  TO
 AND THE PERSIAN .

I WILL  REPAIRED FOR
 WAR. THE MESSAGE
IS  MING TO KICK
YOUR ASS, SADDAM



NOW CAN YOU GUESS WHY GEORGE W. BUSH
IS HELLBENT ON A WAR AGAINST IRAQ?
FUELLING THE CONFLICT: PAGES 4 & 5



DON'T CONFUSE DYING FOR

OIL

WITH FIGHTING FOR

FREEDOM

Energy transitions as political struggles

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“socio-political struggles with fossil fuel companies and other incumbent firms (e.g. electric utilities, car companies) will be crucial in the case of low-carbon transitions. In fact, *politically inspired regime destabilization may be necessary to create opportunities for the wider diffusion of renewables, which now face uphill struggles against resistant regimes*”.

(Geels, 2014: 37; emphasis added).

Political struggle against fossil fuel interests - from corporations to fossil fuel or ‘petrocultures’ and associated practices and socially sanctioned objectives such as consumerism and orthodox economic growth

The achievement of climate justice is therefore one of decarbonisation, divestment, politically motivated transition/destabilisation of the incumbent energy and economic system i.e. carbon fuelled capitalism

Political strategies for energy transformation

“Civil society and grassroots action we believe are and will continue to be central, given the political inertia, foot-dragging, and counter-resistance within state and corporate structures, institutions, and actors within the global carbon energy complex. This could range from mobilisations against the incumbent carbon energy system through divestment campaigns or parliamentary and party political activities in addition to extra-parliamentary action from initiatives like the Carbon Disclosure Project and Carbon Tracker.

This would also include non-violent civil disobedience against carbon power stations and against unconventional or ‘sub-prime’ fossil fuel extraction such as fracking. It would also include campaigns against the ‘science fiction’-like techno-optimism of carbon capture and sequestration (CCS), or geoengineering proposals for solar radiation management”

Conclusions

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Urgency of climate crisis, biodiversity crisis, growing inequality, fuel and energy poverty etc require radical forms of citizenship to tackle 'actually existing unsustainability'

In the age of the 'anthropocene' (or 'capitalocene'?) where radical technological solutions such as geoengineering, 'climate hacking' and 'planetary management' (expert, top-down) are being seriously proposed, where are the equally radical political and democratic strategies?

Educating and cultivating the skills and knowledge necessary for such active forms of green citizenship – tomorrow's presentation