Karen Bell (2014), *Achieving Environmental Justice: A Cross-National Analysis*. Bristol: Policy Press. £70.00, pp. 304, hbk.
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Achieving Environmental Justice takes a comparative approach to the study of the causes and outcomes of environmental injustice by focusing on the nation-state as the primary unit of analysis. While Bell attends to the limitations of comparative and national scale studies, even admitting that 'It was difficult to know what could be considered to be reliable information at all stages of data gathering' (p. 11), the book's contribution to systematic environmental justice analysis is noteworthy. For one thing, *Achieving Environmental Justice* is the first work to attempt to compare and contrast multiple nation-states (seven in total) on the grounds of environmental injustice and justice. Additionally, the book also offers the perspective of a seasoned environmental and social activist and 'engaged' environmental justice scholar dedicated to understanding the cross-national scope of environmental justice problems, politics and solutions.

Bell formulates a 'working definition' of environmental justice to measure environmental injustice and justice and develop what she calls the 'Environmental Justice Indicators' (EJI) framework. This framework, which aims to measure real indicators of procedural, distributive and substantive justice, was somewhat difficult to follow and as she warns 'There is certainly scope for such frameworks to be misused' (p. 24). Nonetheless, Bell has honoured the complexity of environmental justice by attempting to measure various indicators of substantive justice (e.g., *universal* access to adequate waste disposal), distributive justice (e.g., *equal* access to adequate waste disposal), and procedural justice (e.g., all parties affected by environmental decisions to be invited to contribute to the decision-making process). That said, *Achieving Environmental Justice* does not attempt to necessarily simplify cross-national attempts to measure environmental justice and injustice by turning against subjective experiences of environmental justice – the so-called 'cultural' dimensions of environmental justice activism – but instead aims to provide an analytic foundation for developing an indicators framework that environmental justice activists can use to challenge what Bell calls 'Damaging Hegemonic Environmental Discourses'.

Damaging Hegemonic Environmental Discourses (DHED), according to Bell, is a critical theoretical perspective, rooted in Frankfurt School philosophy, which argues that circulating discourses reinforce the power of Earth plundering political-economic systems like capitalism. The indicators generated from her EJI Framework are believed to help fuel counter-hegemonic movements like the global environmental justice movement, even if such indicators fall short of grappling with the complexities of environmental justice movement actors and the subjective motivations informing contentious political action.

Bell reminds us that 'environmental justice legislation, implementation and enforcement, where it exists, has mainly focused on the management of risk and the control of public resistance to environmental harms, rather than on eliminating harmful production and consumption altogether' (p. 216). Both capitalist and socialist varieties of social life, labour and governance harness the capacity for 'harmful' production and consumption, leading Bell to avoid simply concluding that socialist Cuba, for example, is necessarily more environmentally just than the UK or the United States. Rather, the point is to 'explain environmental justice in terms of ... discrimination, market dynamics, a lack of citizen power, industrialisation, individual behavior and culture' (p. 216). Furthermore, the 'degrowth' option and path taken in Cuba, as Bell suggests, can be a source of inspiration for DHED challenges, but generally falls short of leading to big change since 'It is difficult to imagine how degrowth, under capitalism, would work in terms of achieving environmental justice, since, when growth causes or slows down within capitalist economies, unemployment and poverty generally increase' (p. 203). Yet, as

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Naomi Klein recently suggests (Klein, 2014), 'managed degrowth' might end up being the only route or realistic source of optimism left.

Bell does not engage Amartya Sen's recent work on justice (Sen, 2009), but one foundational insight of this work, and which could shed critical light on the need for *thinking* and *diagnosing* justice to *achieve* environmental justice, is the idea that 'we can have a strong sense of injustice on many different grounds, and yet not agree on one particular ground as being *the* dominant reason for the diagnosis of injustice' (Sen, 2009: 2, his emphasis). The different 'grounds' under analysis in *Achieving Environmental Justice* are both the various forms of injustice proliferating in the United States, South Korea, United Kingdom, Sweden, China, Bolivia and Cuba, and the social, political, and economic grounds from which forms of environmental injustice and justice exist and persist in these selected nation-states. Regardless of the varieties of struggle informing environmental justice politics in these diverse places, the gravity of the substantive environmental justice stance – everyone deserves to live in a healthy environment – connects these struggles and in turn fuels the vision of justice explored throughout *Achieving Environmental Justice*.

As one of the first truly comparative studies of environmental justice analysis, *Achieving Environmental Justice* fills a gap in environmental justice scholarship. While a focus on indicators for comparison is rightfully confining or can overlook fine-grained micropolitical dimensions of environmental justice advocacy (Little, 2012), Bell has taken a critical step to showcase and broaden our understanding of the international scope of environmental justice politics, including forms of action and outcomes. *Achieving Environmental Justice* will remain a strong analytical resource and source of critical comparative environmental justice scholarship, especially one that will continue to embrace the 'good life' aspirations, the collective desires and acts of solidarity that aim to bring the environmental justice community together. In Bell's words 'We have to paint a more compelling picture of the good life in an environmentally and socially just society and develop policies that will bring this vision about' (p. 232).

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PETER C. LITTLE
Rhode Island College
plittle@ric.edu

James Lovelock (2014), *A Rough Ride to the Future*. London: Allen Lane. £16.99, pp. 184, hbk.
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James Lovelock is a distinguished, if maverick, scientist (he describes himself as a scientist-inventor) whose many original research contributions have been massively out-cited by his Gaia hypothesis/theory that he introduced in his sixties and has done much to promote in the last thirty-five years, winning him a wide range of high honours. In *A Rough Ride to the Future*, published in his ninety-fifth year, he both reflects on a long and productive life in science and considers the future: Gaia is at the core of everything he says, but – as he makes clear from the outset – it is not a book about Gaia.

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