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Jack M. Hollander

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#3134574 in Books Jack M Hollander 2004-08-09 2004-08-09Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .63 x 6.00l, .78 #File Name: 0520243285251 pagesThe Real Environmental Crisis Why Poverty Not Affluence Is the Environment s PDF One Enemy | File size: 41.Mb

Jack M. Hollander : The Real Environmental Crisis: Why Poverty, Not Affluence, Is the Environment's Number One Enemy before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Real Environmental Crisis: Why Poverty, Not Affluence, Is the Environment's Number One Enemy:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Oh, THOSE environmental crises, Well-done, but dated By Roger Sweeny It took me a while to figure out this book. So much is about how the worlds poor have it tough. No running water (no clean water). Having to cook on open fires and breathing in soot. Etc. What does that have to do with environmental crisis? What does that have to do with saving the planet? Then I realized I'd forgotten my history. In the 1960s and 70s, American environmentalism was largely about direct threats to peoples welfare: dirty air, dirty water, harmful chemicals released into peoples environment. This was what Hollander was talking about. And hes right. The poor definitely have it worse than the people of the industrialized world. For much of the industrialized world, this is no longer a crisis. Hollander makes much of the fact that when people have to choose between food and clean air, they will choose food. But as their income goes up, they are more willing (and able!) to trade additional riches for a cleaner immediate environment. So, says Hollander, the best environmental strategy is to make poor people rich. He spends a good deal of the book explaining why this wouldnt be an environmental disaster. As people get richer, they have fewer children, so population will stabilize. With better farming practices and genetically modified crops, the world can feed itself on present acreage. There is sufficient clean water if it is handled more efficiently, e.g., getting rid of counter-productive policy that says, Water is so valuable, its price shouldnt reflect its value. Maybe the price should even be zero. He is fairly convincing. However ... The book was completed just before 9/11 and it shows its age. There is a lot of If this, this, this, and this is done right, well be okay. But Americans have learned since the invasion of Iraq that it is dangerous to rely on everything going right. There is no simple way to make poor people rich. Even fourteen years later, most people in the world are not at the point where they care more about environment than income. Things will get worse before they get better. No one knows how long, if ever, a place like Haiti will take to reach that point. Some of his predictions, e.g., hydrogen fuel cell vehicles by 2021, seem overly optimistic. When the book was written, there was still doubt whether the release of carbon dioxide from fossil fuel burning was causing any significant global warming. Satellite results said upper atmosphere temperatures werent going up. However, there was error in the computer code that converted raw data to temperature and once that was corrected, the satellites and ground thermometers agreed. A high standard of living requires cheap, reliable energy and that still means fossil fuels, which means putting a lot of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Without better technology, keeping CO2 down means keeping poor people poor. Finally, there has always been another aspect to environmentalism, what might be called Nature good, People bad. The deep problem with pollution is not that it hurts people but that it hurts Nature. Nature, defined as the world without people, should be left (as far as possible) the way it would be if we werent here. But the more affluent people become, the more likely they are to change the world. For most Americans, environmental crisis is more about this other aspect: protecting biodiversity, habitat preservation, combating climate change, eating organic food, opposing fracking and GMOs. Some times the two aspects are complementary but some times they are opposed. For example, Hollander supports genetically engineered crops. He thinks that they offer substantial benefits to poor people (cheaper and/or more nutritious food) with minimal risk to everyone. I suspect he feels the same way about fracking.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Top-Notch Contribution, Incomplete but Very Much on Target By Robert David STEELE Vivas AMAZON has managed to eradicate virtually all of the voters for non-fiction by labeling them fans. This is so dumb I just shake my head. To find my buried reviews that summarize books in a useful way, use the online free bibliography at oss.net/PIG; just add the three w's. I got this book at the same time as *Eco-Imperialism: Green Power, Black Death* and consider both to be very worthwhile. As much as I and others mocked *The Skeptical Environmentalist: Measuring the Real State of the World* for its data manipulation and unsupported conclusions, I have to say that the push-back has been important, and I am particularly impressed by the devastating critique in the other book (*Eco-Imperialism*) on the lack of integrity among the non-profits who strive to force their agenda on the public without ethical substance. The author focuses on challenging the assumption that affluence in the Third World will destroy the environment, and I have a note, "a thoughtful, remarkable review." As with other books, DDT surfaces here as the poster issue for claims that it is bad for the environment versus claims that it is good for humanity. I respect the core point on page 10: "The real enemies of environmental progress are poverty and tyranny, not technology and global markets." The author was ahead of his time, publishing in 2003, in 2004 the High Level Panel agreed with him and made poverty THE #1 threat to humanity above infectious disease, environmental degradation, and seven other threats. See *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility--Report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change*. There are some great turns of phrase. The author characterizes the current debate as "grains of truth embedded in a sea of exaggeration." I am totally impressed by the author's emphasis that for the five billion poor, the crisis is local and the threats within the threat of poverty are: 01 Hunger 02 Dirty water 03 Disease 04 Scarcity 05 Lack of Education 06 Social inequality, especially of women. On #5, the UN IT folks just announced the opening of a free online university, which is a great start, now we just need for South Africa, China, India, and perhaps Chile to start call centers that offer all the poor education one cell call at a time. [And today Nokia announced a cell phone powered by ambient electro-magnetic waves in the atmosphere, i.e. it can continue running without having to be charged, a huge essential for the poorest of the poor]. On #6 I share the author's view that educating women and empowering women is a major aspect of assuring our future. I was much impressed by *A Half Penny on the Federal Dollar: The Future of Development Aid* and his emphasis on how the best

return on investment for any aid dollar is from the education of women. The author focuses on technological innovation (e.g. the Nordic hand-held device without energy needs that can filter feces water to produce clean drinkable water) and economic efficiency--this book does not mention corruption or "true costs" but the author is on track. He is optimistic because of what we know and despite what we do not know, and I also am sharing his optimism as I see books like *Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Social Movement in History Is Restoring Grace, Justice, and Beauty to the World* and *Collective Intelligence: Creating a Prosperous World at Peace*. He briefly discusses how poverty should be freedom of choice not only in economic terms, but in relation to political and other domains, as espoused by (he quotes) Amartya Sen, Nobel Laureate. He spends a lot of time arguing that population growth is not inevitable and is not the doomsday scenario, capping this with a quote from the UN that suggests that population growth will be static by 2100, accompanying this with a compelling graphic that shows that affluence is the best way to end unreasonable or out of control population growth. In the food section he extols the benefits of biotechnology while ignoring the crimes against humanity, such as Monsanto selling seed that kills its offspring so that the seed has to be bought again. From this book I draw out the urgency of ending the sequestration of technology such as is now prevalent among many patent systems that do not have a "use it or lose it" clause in their schema. There are good discussions of the oceans as the vital commons of the future, of global warming (Al Gore is starting to take a lot of hits for being facile with the truth), on water (water wars, women and water management, underpricing of water negating its efficient use), and on renewable energy. While the author credit innovation with bringing the price of renewable energy down to a tenth of what it was, his knowledge is a bit dated as presented in this book, and I would add that similar gains have been made with respect to the desalination and purification of water from the sea, down from \$10 a cubic meter to under 50 cents a cubic meter. Moore's Law is going to apply to environmentally-relevant technologies, in my view. He provides a thoughtful conclusion and lists seven goals on page 194:

- 01 Freedom and democracy are core foundations for the eradication of poverty
- 02 Gender equality is essential (I would actually return to matriarchies)
- 03 The poor must receive the education and the tools (I add: free cell phones, education by the call as espoused by the Earth Intelligence Network)
- 04 New wealth must be created in sustainable equitable manner that lifts the poor.
- 05 Massive effort is needed to cut diseases in half
- 06 World economy must become truly global, instead of current predatory neo-colonialism
- 07 Foreign aid needs to be targeted at the poor (see my briefing at oss.net/HACK, add the w's).

See also: *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid: Eradicating Poverty Through Profits* (Wharton School Publishing Paperbacks) *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom* *The New Craft of Intelligence: Personal, Public, Political--Citizen's Action Handbook for Fighting Terrorism, Genocide, Disease, Toxic Bombs, Corruption* *Election 2008: Lipstick on the Pig* (Substance of Governance; Legitimate Grievances; Candidates on the Issues; Balanced Budget 101; Call to Arms: Fund We Not Them; Annotated Bibliography)

16 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Very well researched and supported arguments on the subject. By Abacus This short book covers a huge amount of ground. In each chapter, the author focuses on a single issue that other authors covered with entire books. If you want to find out more about the oil crisis, global warming, the future of alternative energy, the sustainability of water resources it is all in here. In each case, the author adopts a most informative approach. He shares with you the data, the scientific foundation, and the environmental outlook. As you read through these chapters, you'll find out we are not likely to run out of oil in the near future. This is because of the combination of increasing energy efficiency and improving technology that renders more geological terrain accessible for oil exploration. Similarly, nuclear energy and alternative energy have still a long way to go to become viable substitute for fossil fuel. His chapter on global warming is excellent. I have studied several books and analyzed data on this subject. And, the author in just little over 20 pages covered this complex topic extremely well. His conclusion is far less dramatic than the media's. Most of global warming is due to natural long term climate oscillation. The rise in anthropogenic CO2 is unlikely to destabilize our climate. A potential rise of a couple of degrees is unlikely to hurt our ecosystems. Global warming has not been associated with a more volatile climate including rising occurrence of extreme events (tornadoes, hurricanes, etc...). Climate models, so far, are extremely poor predictors of climate parameters be it precipitation or temperature. The author makes an interesting case that environment deterioration is associated with poverty. Some reviewers of this book argue the opposite, that environment deterioration is caused by the more affluent societies who exploit resources without enough environmental concern. They further argue that as the billions of Indians and Chinese individuals become more affluent, they will in turn exploit the environment to its detriment. The author's argument is founded on his three stages of development. The first one is associated with third world countries relying mainly on wood burning for fuel. The second one is industrialization associated with pollution and little environmental concern. The third one is advanced technology associated with the information age, greater energy efficiency, greater environmental protection that comes with affluence. He makes the case that third world countries have the opportunity to leapfrog the second stage (polluting industrialization) and reach out to the third stage (information technology). Overall, I found this book easy to read, very informative, and interesting. Environmental activists who may disagree with him will have to accept that his opinions are well founded. Each of his arguments are well supported by references to peer reviewed scientific papers.

Drawing a completely new road map toward a sustainable future, Jack M. Hollander contends that our most critical environmental problem is global poverty. His balanced, authoritative, and lucid book challenges widely held beliefs that economic development and affluence pose a major threat to the world's environment and resources. Pointing to the great strides that have been made toward improving and protecting the environment in the affluent democracies, Hollander makes the case that the essential prerequisite for sustainability is a global transition from poverty to affluence, coupled with a transition to freedom and democracy. *The Real Environmental Crisis* takes a close look at the major environment and resource issues: population growth; climate change; agriculture and food supply; our fisheries, forests, and fossil fuels; water and air quality; and solar and nuclear power. In each case, Hollander finds compelling evidence that economic development and technological advances can relieve such problems as food shortages, deforestation, air pollution, and land degradation, and provide clean water, adequate energy supplies, and improved public health. The book also tackles issues such as global warming, genetically modified foods, automobile and transportation technologies, and the highly significant Endangered Species Act, which Hollander asserts never would have been legislated in a poor country whose citizens struggle just to survive. Hollander asks us to look beyond the media's doomsday rhetoric about the state of the environment, for much of it is simply not true, and to commit much more of our resources where they will do the most good: to lifting the world's population out of poverty.

"Hollander is saying that instead of wringing our hands about how our rich nations are raping the environment, we should be focusing on trying to raise the standard of living in poorer and developing countries." -- "Publishers Weekly" From the Inside Flap "Jack Hollander has written a lucid and path-breaking book. He is completely convincing in his thesis that it is poverty we should be addressing, both for the environment and for moral reasons, and that science, technology, markets, and affluence are the friends of the environment and poverty is the enemy. The book is of the highest scholarship and gets the big picture right; the arguments on both sides are addressed with clear thinking and clear prose. Though he is an eminent scientist, Hollander has a wonderful talent for keeping technical jargon to a minimum yet making the essence of technical arguments clear. Both the intelligent layman and the environmental scientist will learn much from this book. I did, and enjoyed the book immensely." Bruce Ames, Former Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences Center, University of California, Berkeley "This book is a much-needed reminder that declining environmental integrity is not and certainly need not be an inexorable attribute of economic progress. Throughout the book the author dispels a number of closely related myths, such as that of steadily increasing scarcity of energy resources. Hollander provides a corrective to the simplistic and unbalanced treatment of environmental and natural resource topics one encounters all too often in the media and in public debate." Joel Darmstadter, *Resources for the Future*; editor, *Global Development and the Environment: Perspectives on Sustainability* "This work is extremely important and makes a major contribution to the debate and decision-making surrounding efforts to eradicate poverty and protect the environment. In a uniquely balanced manner, Hollander adds to the general understanding of how poverty and wealth contribute to sustainable management of natural resources." Per Pinstrup-Andersen, author of *Seeds of Contention: World Hunger and the Global Controversy over GM Crops* "Jack Hollander puts forth two simple hypotheses. The first, explicit, is that environmental sustainability depends on extending prosperity to the developing world. The second, implicit, is that the sustainability of environmentalism depends on transparent and objective science. Both are well defended in Hollander's clear, well researched and timely book." Richard S. Lindzen, Massachusetts Institute of Technology