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Peer reviewed

Review: Environmental Policy: A Casebook

By Robert P. Watson, Dwight C. Kiel, and Stephen F. Robar (Eds.)

Reviewed by [Elery Hamilton-Smith](#)
Charles Sturt University, Australia

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Robert P. Watson, Dwight C. Kiel, & Stephen F. Robar (Eds.). *Environmental Policy: A Casebook*. Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing. 2003. 171 pp. ISBN 1-5752-4233-8. US\$27.50

This would be indeed a valuable work for those who like to teach by the book. It comprises twenty realistic but fictional case studies, each with questions for discussion and a role-play scenario. The themes covered are natural resources management, water, air quality, the urban environment, and waste management. The various authors have provided a competent although comparable (or is it stereotyped?) series of relatively familiar examples.

The treatment throughout is obviously focused upon what the individual might achieve through local action: nice demonstrations of the "Think Globally, Act Locally" strategy. There is little discussion of culturally-based differences in assumptions and values and the way in which cultural difference shapes competing hegemonies.

Having taught in this area at both undergraduate and staff development levels over many years, I must say that I would not use such a text. It is all too neatly pre-fabricated, and while it might create awareness and interest in beginning students (or beginning faculty), I fear it would do little to foster a sense of critical inquiry as a basis for action.

The classes in which my own students appeared to gain most were those in which the students were divided into small groups and each group had to carry total responsibility for a fortnight's teaching of their peers. It was all based in someone's comment that lectures are not very useful because the lecturer learns more than their students! But most of my students obviously recognized that, and so their teaching involved very little lecturing.

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