Their attempt to present narratives of disadvantaged communities is an instance of refusing those communities their own voice. We should instead allow communities to speak for themselves. If that means a nihilist movement, we should allow that movement to continue.

Yamamoto and Lyman 1

Eric K, Hawaii Law School law prof., and Jen-L W, UC Berkeley visiting law prof., University of Colorado Law Review, 72 U. Colo. L. Rev. 311, Spring, p. 311-313, ln

The framework, however, at times also undercuts environmental justice struggles by racial and indigenous communities because it tends to foster misassumptions about race, culture, sovereignty, and the importance of distributive justice. Those misassumptions sometimes lead environmental justice scholars and activists to miss what is of central importance to affected communities.¶ The first misassumption is that for all racialized groups in all situations, a hazard-free physical environment is their main, if not only, concern. [n47](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n47) Environmental justice advocates foster this notion by placing emphasis on "high quality environments" [n48](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n48) and the adverse health effects caused by exposure to air pollutants and hazardous waste materials.¶ [\*321] Not all facility sitings that pose health risks, however, warrant full-scale opposition by host communities. Some communities, on balance, are willing to tolerate these facilities for the economic benefits they confer or in lieu of the cultural or social disruption that might accompany large-scale remedial efforts. Other communities, struggling to deal with joblessness, inadequate education, and housing discrimination, indeed with daily survival, prefer to devote most of their limited time and political capital to those challenges. In these situations, racial and indigenous communities may have pressing needs and long-range goals beyond the re-siting of polluting facilities. [n49](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n49)¶ For example, as Native communities endeavor to ameliorate conditions of poverty and social dislocation by encouraging the economic development of tribal lands, some increasingly find themselves in conflict with environmentalists, who are sometimes but not always environmental justice advocates. In the mining industry, several Native American tribes are attempting to tap mineral resources on their reservations. [n50](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n50) Urged by the increased emphasis on economic self-determination in federal Native American policy in the 1970s, the tribes formed the Council of Energy Resource Tribes to deal [\*322] with both the siting of new mines on Native American lands and the environmental and the cultural problems that might result. [n51](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n51) Those efforts met stiff opposition from some environmental groups concerned mainly with land degradation and pollution. The environmentalists' seeming lack of understanding of the economic and cultural complexity of the Native American groups' decisions have led some Native Americans to express cynicism about environmentalists who sometimes treat them as mascots for the environmental cause. [n52](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n52)¶ The established framework also assumes that fair distribution of physical burdens is the primary, if not sole, means of achieving environmental justice. Sheila Foster rejects this assumption as "monolithic" [n53](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n53) and "one-dimensional," [n54](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n54) focusing "too much on outcomes and not enough on the processes that produce those outcomes." [n55](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n55) According to Foster, by not addressing why racial communities are overexposed to pollution, hazardous waste sites, and poisoned fish stocks, agencies like the EPA fail to confront: "discriminatory housing and real estate policies and practices, residential segregation and limited residential choices influenced by such discrimination, discriminatory zoning regulations and ineffective land use policies, racial disparities in the availability of jobs and municipal services, imbalances in political access and power, and "white flight.'" [n56](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n56)¶ The established framework's prescription of the public's role is also limited. Under the pluralist model, since "preferences are defined by the relative power of self-interested subjects[,] they may be distorted by existing inequalities, poorly construed as a result of exclusion and unequal political clout or prove simply unethical." [n57](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n57) Since "environmental justice challenges reside in an ethical dimension beyond" [n58](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n58) utilitarian choices, the pluralism model cannot resolve all problems associated with environmental racism.¶ [\*323] The civic republican model may seem "intuitively better equipped to respond to the ethical claim of environmental justice" [n59](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n59) by depending on a discourse of the "common good." But, critics ask, how realistic is it to believe that self-interested groups will sacrifice their economic self-interest to an often vaguely defined "common good"? [n60](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n60) The "common good," furthermore, is an elastic concept, expanding and contracting depending upon historical, social, and cultural context and power disparities within a community. [n61](http://www.lexisnexis.com/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1348080173825&returnToKey=20_T15565693953&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.92817.33560959937" \l "n61)

Even green technologies have massive environmental consequences – renewable technologies rely on huge amounts of precious metals and rare earth minerals – mining, refining, and shipping these resources produces massive chemical pollution, water supply contamination, greenhouse gases, and topsoil erosion

Downey, Barnes & Clark 10

(Liam, is an associate professor of sociology at the University of Colorado at Boulder, Eric, is a doctoral student at the University of Colorado at Boulder, Katherine, graduate student in environmental studies at the University of Colorado at Boulder, “Natural Resource Extraction, Armed Violence, and Environmental Degradation”, Organ Environ, 2010 December; 23(4): 417–445, http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3169238/)

The social, political, and economic importance of efficiently extracting and safely transporting natural resources cannot be underestimated. State, military, and geopolitical power, capital accumulation, social stability, industrial production, and the legitimacy of the state and economy all depend on large, increasing, and ever more concentrated withdrawals of natural resources from the earth (Bunker & Ciccantell, 2005; Gould, Pellow, & Schnaiberg, 2004, 2008; Klare, 2001, 2004; O’Connor, 1996; Schnaiberg & Gould, 2000). Moreover, because natural resources are the ultimate source of all the energy and goods we produce, consume, and throw away, natural resource extraction harms the environment not only at the “point of extraction” but globally as well. Thus, the grave environmental problems associated with industrial production and consumption (in both capitalist and noncapitalist societies) would not exist, or would not exist in their current form, if industrial societies were unable to efficiently extract and safely transport vast quantities of natural resources. Computer production, for example, could not occur without the extraction of minerals, fossil fuels, and other natural resources from around the world. One such category of resources is rare earth minerals, which are mined primarily in China (NRC, 2008). The mining of rare earth minerals produces as much as 2,000 tons of solid waste, including toxic heavy metals and radioactive thorium, for every ton of rare earth mineral produced (Farago, 2009; Rong & Yu, 2009). In China, it also results in topsoil loss, erosion, and widespread silting and contamination of rivers and reservoirs used for drinking and irrigation (Xu & Liu, 1999).2 Computers also harm the environment during the production, assembly, consumer use, shipping, disposal, and recycling stages of their lives and thus affect the environment and human health around the world. Environmental impacts during these stages of a computer’s life include abiotic depletion, global warming, the release of toxins into the environment, human exposure to highly toxic materials, acidification, ozone depletion, the formation of photoxidants, and water eutrophication/(Choi, Shin, Lee, & Hur, 2006). Because computing power is so critical to globalization and economic growth, computer use also helps foster environmental problems associated with these phenomena. It would be difficult to argue, therefore, that the environmental problems associated with computer use and production are confined solely to the resource extraction stage of the commodity chain or that the environmental problems associated with the remaining stages of a computer’s life would exist without the extraction of the minerals, fuels, and other natural resources needed to produce, ship, use, recycle, and dispose of computers. This is true, of course, of all the products we use and produce, including weapons systems, automobiles, solar panels, and cell phones. Thus, resource extraction is a pivotal link in the chain connecting human activity and social organization to environmental degradation.

#### CO2 increases growth of plants

Dr. Sherwood Idso, President of the Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change, and Keith Idso, Vice President, “Atmospheric CO2 Enrichment Increases Quantity of Plant Biomass Without Sacrificing Quality,” Volume 4, Number 13, March 28, 2001, http://www.co2science.org/edit/v4\_edit/v4n13edit.htm, accessed 11/28/01

In a comprehensive new review of this subject, Idso and Idso (2001) summarize what is known. They note, first of all, that significant increases in the air's CO2 concentration often lead to small reductions in the protein concentrations of animal-sustaining forage and human-sustaining cereal grains when soil nitrogen concentrations are sub-optimal. When these crops are supplied with adequate nitrogen, however, as is typical of modern farming techniques, the Idsos report that "no such reductions are observed." But not all countries have ready access to commercial fertilizers. What happens in those cases? Does food quality decline? Probably not. The rate of rise of the atmosphere's CO2 concentration is only a couple parts per million per year, which is fully two orders of magnitude less than the CO2 increases employed in most experiments that show small reductions in plant protein contents when soil nitrogen concentrations are less than adequate; and there are many ways in which the tiny amount of extra nitrogen needed to maintain current crop protein concentrations in the face of such a small yearly increase in the air's CO2 concentration may be readily acquired. For one thing, crops experiencing rising levels of atmospheric CO2 will likely produce larger and more-branching root systems (as they typically do in experiments when exposed to elevated CO2 concentrations), which should allow them to more effectively explore ever larger volumes of soil for the extra nitrogen and other nutrients the larger CO2-enriched crops will need as the air's CO2 content continues to rise. Also, tiny bacteria and algae that remove nitrogen from the air and make it directly available to plants are found nearly everywhere; and elevated atmospheric CO2 concentrations typically enhance their ability to perform this vital function. Hence, as these phenomena are gradually enhanced by the slowly rising CO2 content of the air, the slowly rising nutrient requirements of both crops and natural vegetation should be easily satisfied; and plant protein concentrations should therefore be maintained, at the very least, at their current levels. In the case of other important plant constituents, atmospheric CO2 enrichment is much more than neutral; it clearly makes good things better. Elevated CO2 concentrations have been shown to increase the concentration of vitamin C in various fruits and vegetables, for example; and it increases the concentrations of disease-fighting substances in plants that are prized for their medicinal properties. In experiments with the woolly foxglove (*Digitalis lanata*), for example, in addition to increasing plant biomass by 63 to 83%, a near-tripling of the air's CO2 content increased the concentration of heart-helping digoxin by 11 to 14%. And in the tropical spider lily (*Hymenocallis littoralis*), in addition to increasing plant biomass by 56%, a 75% increase in the air's CO2 content increased the concentrations of five different substances proven effective in treating a number of human cancers (melanoma, brain, colon, lung, renal) and viral diseases (Japanese encephalitis and yellow, dengue, Punta Tora and Rift Valley fevers) by 6 to 28%. After reviewing many other aspects of the impact of atmospheric CO2 enrichment on plant tissue composition, the Idsos conclude by saying it is likely that "the ongoing rise in the air's CO2 content will continue to increase food production around the world, while maintaining the nutritive quality of that food and enhancing the production of certain disease-inhibiting plant compounds."