

Polluted Promises: Environmental Racism and the Search for Justice in a Southern Town

Melissa Checker

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Melissa Checker : Polluted Promises: Environmental Racism and the Search for Justice in a Southern Town
before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Polluted Promises: Environmental Racism and the Search for Justice in a Southern Town:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Shameful and challenging By Mike Baldwin I bought this book because it was on a required reading list for a cultural anthropology "American Communities" class. I normally resell

my textbooks after the semester ends, but I have this one prominently stored in my library for quick reference and re-reading. I found the book fascinating as it detailed the hardships one community endured as a result of chemical dumping. The large company attitude and politics of corporate waste neglect are exposed in this book as shameful and uncaring. I found the bond between neighbors and their enduring fight to save their community encouraging. I hope to think that environmental and social racism has diminished since the time of the Hyde Park injustices. No matter what socio-economic status individuals and neighborhoods have, we are bound together by our common goals, needs and rights. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in learning more about the struggles and challenges that face neighborhoods across this great nation every day.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Sad Story
By Marisa Davis
I read this book and was curious about the long-term outcome. In early 2014, I visited the neighborhood and was shocked because it looked like an abandoned war zone. I found out the entire neighborhood had been seized by the City of Augusta under eminent domain. The city paid to move the residents to other neighborhoods and was planning to demolish the old homes. When I visited, many of the homes had been vacant for months or possibly years (based on the condition), so some had been vandalized or partly destroyed already. Most of the residents offered no resistance to leaving and were happy to move elsewhere after decades of seeking justice.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Polluted Promises is a harsh reality of Environmental Racism....
By F. Kelly
The Book was slightly used with underlining and highlighting in it. It was what I expected. Good deal.

Association for Humanist Sociology 2007 Book Award co-winner
Julian Steward Award 2006 Runner-Up!

Over the past two decades, environmental racism has become the rallying cry for many communities as they discover the contaminations of toxic chemicals and industrial waste in their own backyards. Living next door to factories and industrial sites for years, the people in these communities often have record health problems and debilitating medical conditions. Melissa Checker tells the story of one such neighborhood, Hyde Park, in Augusta, Georgia, and the tenacious activism of its two hundred African American families. This community, at one time surrounded by nine polluting industries, is struggling to make their voices heard and their community safe again. *Polluted Promises* shows that even in the post-civil rights era, race and class are still key factors in determining the politics of pollution.

“Melissa Checker's absorbing story is a portrait of America. *Polluted Promises* showcases the complex links between toxic waste and race, and the hope-filled journeys of environmental activists who are wise, strong, and spiritual in their fight against toxic waste—and for their lives. Checker is doing public anthropology for social justice.” -Carol Stack, author of *All Our Kin* “A very rich, organized, and theoretically interesting ethnographic case study of environmental activism. Checker beautifully recounts how the issues of race emerged and were manipulated in social organizing against environmental poisoning.” -George E. Marcus, author of *Ethnography through Thick and Thin* “*Polluted Promises* is a substantial accomplishment. It grounds the notion of environmental justice wonderfully in practical terms, in the theoretically sophisticated and empathetic examination of Hyde Park.” -Adolph Reed, Jr., author of *Class Notes: Posing As Politics and Other Thoughts on the American Scene* “In this highly readable account . . . Checker has written a fine book. Assigned to students interested in urbanism, science and technology studies, race relations in the United States, environment, or social movements, the book is sure to spark thoughtful conversation.” -*American Anthropologist* “I hope that (this book) doesn't get pigeonholed as a dry, academic treatise, because it is anything but that. It is a wonderfully written account of the struggles by the residents of Hyde Park, a neighborhood in Augusta, Georgia, to undo decades of...environmental racism.” -*In Brief*

About the Author
Melissa Checker teaches in the Department of Urban Studies, Queens College/CUNY. She is co-editor of *Local Actions: Cultural Activism, Power, and Public Life*. She is donating all of her proceeds from this book to the Hyde and Aragon Park Improvement Committee.