
Editorial

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Biographical note: Phillip Thompson is a Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Seattle University. He also serves as the Director of Seattle University at the Center for Environmental Justice and Sustainability. He teaches courses in Environmental Engineering and Economics and is the faculty advisor for Seattle University student chapter of the Engineers for a Sustainable World. He attended the University of Iowa where he received his PhD and MS in Environmental Engineering and an undergraduate degree in biology. He is also a registered Professional Engineer in the State of Washington.

In August 2014, attendees from around the world presented over 100 papers at the Seattle University's Center for Environmental Justice and Sustainability's inaugural conference *Just Sustainability: Hope for the Commons*. The conference highlights included perspectives from Bill McKibben, Vandana Shiva and Denis Hayes. Their messages reminded us that we need to stop extracting fossil fuels, to preserve agricultural biodiversity and to remain hopeful for change. This latter point for hope was made by Earth Day co-founder Hayes who pointed to the significant changes that have occurred over the past 50 years in the areas of civil rights and environmental protection. These changes were largely due to the efforts of young leaders, and the changes that society needs now can be realised in a similar way. Whether it is a future that is free from fossil fuels or one that has living wages that ensure the well-being of all, we can be hopeful that these shifts can happen.

Social and environmental changes begin with vigorous public discussions and *Just Sustainability* provided a wonderful forum. This special issue of *Interdisciplinary Environmental Review* contains a sampling of the broad spectrum of papers that were presented at the conference and represent the change that is happening in the areas of environmental justice, water, food, energy, policy and pedagogy. In 'Sk8ting the sinking city', Benjamin Shirtcliff explores the transformation of abandoned cityscapes to places where youth can participate in skating or other recreational activities. Such transformations can provide the much-needed support for communities and can lead to both social and environmental sustainability. 'Gentrified sustainability' examines the tensions of environmental justice and housing development. As lower income residents become increasingly pushed towards less-desirable areas, they assume more of the burdens associated with poor environmental air quality. In their paper, Evans-Agnew et al. discuss a pedagogical approach for environmental justice that is interdisciplinary and that values both human and non-human perspectives. By engaging students in urban studies, nursing, and environmental ethics, the paper demonstrates that environmental

justice must be discussed with a more complex and integrative framework and not as a binary debate.

In 'The waters of consumptive sustainability', Gary Chamberlain explores the need to restrain human water consumption while increasing advocacy for policies that support the water rights for humans and non-humans, alike. He also argues that this new water ethic could be promoted through a revitalised Christianity that seeks to value water for all of creation. In his paper on eating and food systems, Chris Doran reminds us of the human connection with soil (indeed all of creation) and how, through the lens of Christian understanding, food can represent hope over despair. In 'Imagining the hydrogen future of 2050', Ferro et al. analyses the potential for the production of hydrogen fuel via the hydrolysis of water using photovoltaic cells, wind power and other means. Their work suggests that advances in hydrolysis technologies will displace oil-based fuels by the end of this century.

In the area of environmental law, Jane Kloeckner makes an argument for elevating the Environmental Protection Agency to a cabinet-level department of the environment, and she explores critical changes to the Clean Water Act. In 'The role of risk perception in building sustainable policy instruments', Chad McGuire explores a coastal insurance policy case study and considers how the implementation of precautionary, sustainability policies are often hindered by risk perception, both perceived and real.

With regard to pedagogy, Jennifer Atkinson brings together the humanities and student reflections on 'ordinary' environmental experiences. Initially viewed by students as a 'sentimental indulgence', this pedagogical combination results in richer interpretations and challenges to the values espoused by classic environmental writings. These experiences also enabled some students to re-imagine their own roles within the biotic community. In 'Environmental education in prison', Weber et al. examines the changes in knowledge about and attitudes toward environmental topics for men and women who participated in prison education programs. This quantitative pedagogical study also compares the effectiveness of lectures to workshops for these programs. Murdoch-Kitt et al. discuss their innovative case studies that are used by students from the Rochester Institute of Technology School of Design with students from the Virginia Commonwealth University in Doha, Qatar. These researchers examined the use of sustainability-oriented project-based methods for helping students develop their graphic design and overall communication skills. Finally, Gordon and Ball posit that campus sustainability goals may be achieved by having co-curricular programs implement peer-education. This approach can positively bring about a change in student behaviour particularly when a critical reflection and discourse are used to develop a strong sense of community.

Behaviour change is perhaps the key for ensuring social and environmental sustainability. The following papers offer suggestions for change that can move us closer to ensuring the well-being of humans and nature. I hope that you will enjoy reading this truly interdisciplinary volume of scholarly works, and I look forward to continue our change-making discussions at *Just Sustainability* in August 2016.