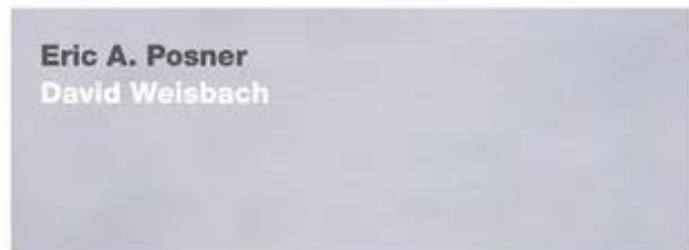


(Read free ebook) Climate Change Justice

Climate Change Justice

Eric A. Posner, David Weisbach

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#3295854 in Books Posner Eric A 2015-06-23 2015-06-23Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.06 x .58 x 6.06l, .0 #File Name: 0691166668232 pagesClimate Change Justice | File size: 70.Mb

Eric A. Posner, David Weisbach : Climate Change Justice before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Climate Change Justice:

0 of 10 people found the following review helpful. excellentBy Bruno FEverything was on time and excellent. . It was easy to pay and it was also fast. Thank you for your job15 of 21 people found the following review helpful. Procustes' bed?By Sceptique500The premise of this book is: "The importance of an international treaty (to mitigate climate change) can scarcely be exaggerated" (pg. 2), in fact, the authors endow the "broad, deep, and enforceable treaty" with

an ethical obligation (pg. 169 - 170) - no justification given for this deontological imperative. The prospect of an enforceable treaty immediately raises issues that go beyond its goals and the means, namely those of entitlements, rights, and obligations under the treaty. These issues have to be settled prior to its conclusion. Given the stakes involved, all sorts of claims have been lodged: some spurious, some wrong or misguided, some justified. The book tries to sort out these claims, grouping them under several headings: (a) distributive justice (should the treaty be a means to redistribute wealth from the rich to the poor); (b) guilt (a broad application of the 'polluter pays' principle); (c) per capita allocation of pollution entitlements; (d) treatment of future generations. The analysis is not always an easy one to follow. This is partly inherent in the way claims are staked: they are usually sweeping, emotional, and contain different strands that have to be taken apart painstakingly. For the first three items the claims for 'special and differentiated responsibility' are questioned, and the authors argue that "nations should approach the climate problem with a forward-looking, pragmatic perspective", rather than try to use the opportunity to settle scores, in the specific climate change area or in general. One caveat: when adjudicating entitlements, it would seem important to me as a precondition to adjudicate the question: "who is the eventual polluter?" Much is made in the book about China's and India's contribution to current emissions. Nothing is said about the fact that (primarily China) has become the manufacturing giant of the world, while the West has moved to (relatively) pollution-free services: "My country is carbon neutral: others do the dirty work" - won't do. Brazil's high per capita emissions might be linked to it being a large agricultural exporter. And New Zealand is being penalised for producing milk, butter and meat for the world at large. That such adjudication is not easy, I accept. That the issue should be ignored seems problematic to me, particularly if one were to toy with the idea of 'per capita emission rights'. This being said, there is much wisdom in the authors' conclusion. One may underscore their conclusions by recalling that, an argument about entitlements implies a full 'audit of entitlements': if the environment is a 'common resource', then why not oil, or copper, or diamonds? If slavery, why not female oppression? If racially-motivated genocide, why not political, or religion-driven jobs (the Thirty Year War my good example)? Redressing one tort may not bring about justice, if others are left unheeded. Justice is indivisible, and once one arrogates him/herself the right to adjudicate entitlements, all wrongs need totalling up in a universe of infinite possibilities, where icy chance plays its own unpredictable game. On the treatment of future generations, I reckon that the authors hedge their bets: though they accept the 'principle of intergenerational neutrality' they plead for choosing projects with high rates of return. I found this section rather hard going and unsatisfactory. If saving lives is the issue, why not spend it on malaria, or a pneumonia vaccine? Each generation can save lives, and there is little reason to favour those in a distant future. The intergenerational argument rests on the assumption that only explicit and dedicated action will solve the problem - wholly ignoring the embedded role of adaptation. Adaptation is akin to dark matter in astronomy: because it is hard to detect, it attracts little attention. Yet its role is huge - one only has to see the carbon intensity figures as they plummet. With general knowledge doubling every five years or so thanks to our ever increasing ingenuity, it is hard to imagine that this knowledge is unlikely collaterally to address the problem in the future, and in a big way. And, unlike investment, knowledge does not depreciate. I conclude on a personal note: I'm both amused and amazed that people, who would recoil in horror from advocating central planning, plump for it at the first fashionable opportunity. This applies particularly when they teach at the University of Chicago, and profess some form of libertarianism. An international treaty of emission abatement of world scope is a brainchild of central planning - if I've ever saw one. Is such a treaty at all necessary, even before we argue whether it is an 'ethical' imperative? This issue is relevant, for climate change justice is predicated on an enforceable treaty. If no treaty is needed, in other words, if there are other ways to dealing with climate change, then the whole discussion of climate change justice can be defused or side-stepped, leaving much more time to tackle the substantive issue of climate change - an issue that, according to the authors, we have treated symbolically in the past - we were procrastinating while bickering over entitlements. This is no facile reflection: the INFCCC framework has been 20 years in the making. Is this truly the ONLY way forward? I have my doubts. The principle argument here is not based on material evidence, but on Dr. Hardin's seminal paper "Tragedy of the commons" in 1968, which has since been overtaken by reality - yet most economists, never having read the original paper, keep repeating the mantra uncritically (To save you from having to look it up: Hardin confidently predicted that only an IFCCC-style agreement on population control would allow us to reduce fertility rates. Billions of women have proven him wrong). Ms E. Ostrom won the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2009 for showing scientifically how and where Dr. Hardin went wrong *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action* (Political Economy of Institutions and Decisions), so I leave the matter in better hands than mine. But if my hunch is just a little right, the whole discussion on entitlements is a Procustes' bed. And, I was about to forget: I'm somewhat puzzled by the contention that "the notion of collective responsibility has been rejected by mainstream philosophers (...) and none seems to defend it any more as a matter of principle" (pg. 101). If this is the case, then Hiroshima and Dresden were war crimes, for their justification is only collective responsibility, and so it what happened to Germany in 1945 Germany 1945: From War to Peace. More generally: any war is by definition an act of exacting retaliation on a community. Have we eschewed war? And what about preventive wars? How could a government - even graced by manifest destiny - have a 'right' to fight them, when no tort has been committed yet? 6 of 62 people found the following review helpful. How many angels can dance

on the head of a pin?By Norman RogersThe authors could have debated what to do if it became known that a huge asteroid was heading straight for the earth. That would have been more interesting exercise in wild speculation than musing about what what to do to prevent or embrace apocalyptic climate change. At least astronomy is a solid science and if the astronomers say an asteroid is about to hit the earth you can have some confidence in what they say. The authors do not ask if there is any substance to the predictions of climate doom handed down by the Intergovernmental Committee on Climate Change (IPCC). The supposedly sophisticated law professors seem to think that the highly implausible predictions of the IPCC have been handed down from heaven on stone tablets. Perhaps the authors have to accept apocalyptic climate change predictions as true. There wouldn't be much reason to write most of their book otherwise. Some judge said the constitution is not a suicide pact. But our law professors think that is plausible that the important nations of the world will join in a treaty that would clearly be an economic suicide pact. These nations are supposed to give up most fossil fuels in the name of preventing the hypothetical global warming. These are the same nations that can't sacrifice 5% of the GDP to keep their debt from spiraling out of control. The professors have a real problem with science. They seem to think that if an expert with an impressive false front (i.e. the IPCC or Al Gore) say that the sky is falling it must be so. They eagerly swallow the most fake predictions, such as rising sea level or malaria going wild. There is no indication that their understanding of global warming is even up to the boy scout merit badge level. That said, maybe global warming really is a looming disaster. It's hard to prove a negative.

Climate change and justice are so closely associated that many people take it for granted that a global climate treaty should--indeed, must--directly address both issues together. But, in fact, this would be a serious mistake, one that, by dooming effective international limits on greenhouse gases, would actually make the world's poor and developing nations far worse off. This is the provocative and original argument of Climate Change Justice. Eric Posner and David Weisbach strongly favor both a climate change agreement and efforts to improve economic justice. But they make a powerful case that the best--and possibly only--way to get an effective climate treaty is to exclude measures designed to redistribute wealth or address historical wrongs against underdeveloped countries. In clear language, Climate Change Justice proposes four basic principles for designing the only kind of climate treaty that will work--a forward-looking agreement that requires every country to make greenhouse--gas reductions but still makes every country better off in its own view. This kind of treaty has the best chance of actually controlling climate change and improving the welfare of people around the world.

"Anyone taking part in the next round of climate negotiations in Mexico in December should take this book with them. It is . . . certainly a guide. Legislating for the future is always tricky. This area is trickier than most."--Sir Crispin Tickell, Financial Times "[T]his book is a potent attack on an argument that is growing rapidly in popularity yet declining in clarity and focus. . . . Chapter 1 provides what must be one of the most comprehensive, comprehensible, and yet still succinct accounts of the science of anthropogenic climate change currently in print."--Jamison E. Colburn, Concurring Opinions blog "[B]y reflecting so clearly on the current 'economic consensus', Posner and Weisbach provide a useful introduction to the current state of play in climate change politics."--Joy Paton, Australian Journal of Political Science From the Back Cover "To attract broad participation from the major countries emitting greenhouse gases, both rich and poor, a climate change treaty has to be cost-effective and perceived as fair. In this book, while agreeing that fairness matters, Posner and Weisbach make a provocative case that fairness has been widely misunderstood."--Jonathan B. Wiener, Duke University "This incisive book points the only way forward on climate change. Posner and Weisbach carefully weigh the arguments on a wide range of issues, from what policies have the strongest merit to how we should value the welfare of future generations. The analysis is provocative, judicious, and accessible. Read these pages. They will clarify your thinking."--Richard J. Zeckhauser, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University "There is no challenge facing the world that combines the importance and the apparent intractability of the threat of global climate change. The central problem is the necessity of including all major emitting countries--both developed and developing--in a meaningful international agreement. This raises exceptionally difficult questions regarding distributional equity. Eric Posner and David Weisbach take on these questions, and in the process provide an excellent roadmap to the playing field, and--more important--some surprising and enlightening answers. This book should be on the must-read list of anyone seriously concerned about global climate policy."--Robert N. Stavins, professor and director, Harvard Project on International Climate Agreements "Taking a clear, unflinching, and rigorous approach, this book pierces simplistic views of climate change justice, and makes a strong case for addressing climate change and justice separately. It will change the debate."--Michael P. Vandenbergh, director of the Climate Change Research Network "This is the most sustained and broad-gauged discussion of climate justice that I know of. Serious future debates about the subject will have to deal with this book and its arguments. It will interest general readers as well as specialists in climate policy."--Richard Stewart, author of *Reconstructing Climate Policy: Beyond Kyoto* About the Author Eric A. Posner and David Weisbach teach at the University of Chicago Law School.