Global Im-Possibilites: Exploring the Paradoxes of Just Sustainabilities, edited by Phoebe Godfrey and Mary Buchanan, London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2023, 256 pp., $82.74 (cloth)

This book, in the series Just Sustainabilities, consists of twelve case studies from around the globe as indicated by the wide geographical range of the chapters, "that bring together *both* the lens of just sustainabilities *and* that of intersectionality." The framework of just sustainabilities is based on ensuring a better quality of life for all in a just and equitable manner within the limits of supporting ecosystem. Justice is explicitly included in the conception of sustainability and refers to sustainabilities in the plural so as to acknowledge "the relative, culturally, and place-bound nature of the concept" (2). As the editors Phoebe Godfrey and Mary Buchanan remark, how sustainability looks depends on context and case, and they seek to explore whether or not just sustainabilities will be regarded as possible or dismissed as impossible. Further, the policies, plans, and practices attempting just sustainabilities are often riddled with contradictions and other unforeseen outcomes, well-illustrated by the case studies here. They note increasing polarization, cultural, political and economic, and seek to explore the challenges and opportunities that "increasing polarization offers for the theoretical lens of just sustainabilities" (1).

The book consists of four parts, each of which contains three articles with a common theme.

Part 1, "Promises and Deliveries," examines three projects from proposals through implementation to impact, with investigations of the conflicts, twists and turns on the way to realisation, with a particular focus on the legacies of colonization, discrimination and structural marginalisation in terms of who benefits and who loses out.

Chapter 1, by Lemir Teron, T'Shari White, Farah Nibbs, and Farzaneh Khayat, focuses on development of sports stadiums in Atlanta, USA, promoted as a path to

development with economic gain and environmental improvements, taking place in neighbourhoods shaped by decades of structural racism. For the African American community, there may come short-term gains from employment on construction, but with longer term detriment from impacts on community institutions. These developments were presented as sustainable but were "manifestations of environmental ornamentation—featuring strategies that are noncomprehensive and cynical attempts to ride both the *greenwave* and *illusions* of sustainability" (18).

Chapters 2 and 3, by Jacqline Wolf Tice and David Casagrande ("The sovereignty paradox: negotiating values and tribal adaption to shale oil extraction"), and Evan Shenkin, ("Activism or extractivism: indogenous land struggles in Eastern Bolivia") respectively, are case studies on the impacts on communities in North Dakota and Bolivia of developments on extracting/mining. The "background" in both cases is "centuries-long continent-spanning effects of genocide, colonialism, and land loss." Chapter 3 highlights the contradictions between landscape degradation and political liberation through oil development, and the just resolution can only come through self-determination of, in this case, the MandaAn Hidasta Arikara (MHA) Nation.

The common theme ~~which I saw~~ in these three chapters ~~comes from~~ centres on what would in effect be externally driven economic changes imposed on communities which historically had suffered from colonialism and disadvantage. The changes bring a mixture of what appear as benefits (e.g., employment) but also substantial costs and disruptions.

The three chapters included in Part 2, "Whose Cities?" address the question of "who is this for?" when it comes to implementing just and sustainable policies and practices. It further addresses the question to what extent do the needs of one group undermine the needs of another group, and who undertakes the selection and implementation of the policies involved. Three case studies explore these questions.

Chapter 4 ("The bipolar waterfront: paradoxes or shore-line place-making in contemporary Accra and Colombo") by Rapti Siriwardane-de Zoysa and Epifania A. Amoo-Adare, explores what is termed the "bipolar waterfront," that is waterfront spaces that house extreme wealth and poverty, in Accra and Colombo. The writers discuss city imaginaries (and futures) even as these same cities enact violence and displacement of their urban poor.

Chapter 5 ("Negotiations and contestations of just mobility: rickshaws in Dhaka, Bangladesh"), by Md Musleh Uddin Hasan, examines how infrastructure choices and government restrictions impact nonmotorized transport and its passengers in the use of rickshaws in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The authors expose the differing ideas of mobility, historical and current inequalities between and within nations, and underlying assumptions about who the roads are for.

Chapter 6 (Paradoxes of just sustainabilities in urban water sociotechnical systems: lessons from Athens, Greece), by Marcia Rosalie Hale, analyses the transition within the Athens urban water system with a history shaped by both foreign capital and local heritage. The relationships surrounding water access are complex and contested, and the author argues that there are many questions about the respective places of infrastructure and people in planning priorities.

These three chapters well illustrate the contesting needs of different groups and the conflicts between rich and poor, and the struggles for a just outcome.

Part 3, "Scales of Decision-Making and Action," highlights the role of the spatial contexts and scales. "The physical landscape sets the starting parameters for resource conflicts, including natural uneven distribution of minerals as well as global systems of air and water (and corresponding flows of pollutants with these systems)" (127).

Chapter 7 ("Resistance to restricting? : the politics of cars in Copenhagen"), by Kevin T. Smiley, examines policy contradictions in Copenhagen, where despite being a city praised

for its sustainability, it was faced by political obstacles to battling congestion, in part arising from conflicts between tiers of government. Smiley suggests that Copenhagen was well placed to adopt congestion pricing aimed as reducing car usage in cities, citing its being imbued with a collaborative spirit and a leading example of sustainability policies with a good bicycling infrastructure. However, quantitative data indicates that there was 64 percent support for congestion charging, leaving a substantial minority not in favour. There were critical differences along political lines (right-leaning respondents were heavily against restrictions on cars in the city centre), gender (women were more in favour), and mode of transport used (cyclists, public transport users too were more in favour). From the qualitative data, a timeline was constructed which indicated that the coalition supportive of congestion charge unravelled through the distaste of business circles and the strong opposition of the right-leaning parties.

Chapter 8 ("Popular consultations and extractivosm in Colombia: from local to global actions against mining and climate change), by Arracely Burgos-Ayala and Emerson Harvey Cepeda-Rodríguez, seeks to explores linkages across many local-scale communities that sought to combat the national government's promotion of economic development through extractivism by examining more than 60 socioeconomic environmental conflicts. Table 8.2 provides information on municipalities, cities, and departments in Colombia (2013–2018) with 11 instances where extraction was approved by popular consultations, 12 rejected by municipal councils, and a large number with decisions pending. The authors point to a social transformation and empowerment through the environmental participation mechanisms with the intention of blocking large-scale projects. These mechanisms revealed the conflicts between local communities and central government and development companies. The authors argue that popular consultation can combat a root cause and impacts of climate change, and a

fair and equitable sustainability could be possible through the interactions of demands of social equity, economic security, and environmental protection.

Chapter 9 ("Rescaling energy governance and the democratizing potential of 'community choice'"), by Sean Kennedy, is focused on electricity delivery in California and analyses how "community choice" can promote democratic power, and critically examines how emphasis on "the local' may exacerbate broader regional inequities. The author views the study as highlighting the potential limits of the concept of energy democracy, and provides indications of the degree to which "localized renewable energy initiatives can meaningfully contribute to the pursuit of just sustainabilities" (181).

Part 4 is devoted to "Reimagining the Possible," noting that many are working collectively to create alternative futures, but there is a need to grapple with ideological questions to avoid re-perpetuating past injustices.

Chapter 10 ("Organic (dis)organization and transformation: stories of resistance and retur4n at CERES community environment park"), by Natalie Osborne and Deanna Grant-Smtih, traces the practices of a grassroots community development project (Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies Community Environment Park, CERES) in area north of Melbourne, Australia. The authors state that "CERES is attempting to create the kind of community relationships, and spaces required for a more just and sustainable world" (193). It concludes that while there are "some residual tensions between insiders and outsiders," CERES "has been successful in using its principles of internal movement building to establish and maintain a strong community based on the principles of internal movement building and revitalization." (202)

Chapter 11 ("Just sustainabilities on the range: empowering decisions at the soil surface") by Andrea Malmbereg and Tony Malmberg, examines the general potential of the holistic grazing method for reconceptualizing the role of grasslands and livestock with food-

based ecosystems. Grasslands have been degraded over many centuries, and the authors state that achieving restoration and sustainability requires little technology but "it does require sociocultural shifts that embrace decision-making and management procedures readily adapted to the local context" (209). The authors judge that the effectiveness of holistic management has been well documented.

Chapter 12 ("Welcome to Tubman House"), by Anthony Bayani Rodriguez, examines what led to the formation of what is known at "the 1619 coalition" in Baltimore, Maryland, which pursued a community-based set of solutions to the challenges faced by the residents of the 72-block neighbourhood of Sandtown-Winchester. The author views their efforts as representing "a model of what 'just sustainabilities'… ought to mean in theory and in practice." (222)

The three studies in Part 4 do, as the editors comment, provide local examples of routes to transitioning to just and sustainable societies, with inevitable contradictions.

This book is focused on the complexities of the nature and the possibility of achieving just sustainabilities through a series of locality-based case studies. It concerns communities, local government rather than national government, and contradictions and conflicts between local communities and corporations and others. I would have welcomed a (more extensive) discussion on what is regarded as *just sustainability* and the prevailing criteria of justice and sustainability, as well as of the question how sustainability is to be judged and by whom, and whether actions and activities are socially and environmentally sustainable over time.

Malcolm Sawyer, University of Leeds, UK

m.c.sawyer@lubs.leeds.ac.uk