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Suzanne Marshall. *"Lord, We're Just Trying to Save Your Water": Environmental Activism and Dissent in the Appalachian South.* Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002. 384 pp.

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The Far Reaching Effects of Water Pollution

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H-Floridians will enjoy Suzanne Marshall's work for many reasons. Whereas it does not solely deal with Florida, it clearly demonstrates the necessity of cooperation in the Southeast when dealing with the environment. Marshall uses several case studies from Alabama to Florida to demonstrate that participatory democracy is not only desirable but necessary in regards to environmental policy making. Refreshingly, this is not a history that sets forth to prescribe the absolute in activism. Rather, Marshall presents a variety of case studies, some of which failed while others succeeded to demonstrate the process of activism. This text will prove useful to the scholar, activist, and student as well.

If there were a downside to Marshall's piece, it would be that she writes with such passion that she appears to forget that not all of her readers are familiar with her topic. One could get lost in the quagmire of policy titles and dates. A list of environmental legislation, with dates and convening authority, would have served the book well. She does provide a list of abbreviations, which is helpful with the alphabet soup that plagues any text dealing with governmental agencies. The only other peculiarity that might prove difficult for the reader is her style of notation. She provides excellent notes at the end of the book; however, her citations do not always coincide with quotes. The citations come at the end of the paragraph, where they are listed. Additionally, there are some partial citations in text notations that do not provide page numbers as well as some quotes with no apparent citations whatsoever. These minor irritations do not detract from a book rich in information and narrative.

One of the greatest strengths in Marshall's book, which will lend itself well to a teaching situation, is the grouping of case studies. The text is formatted so that several case studies have participants and causes in common. The story of Jerry Brown begins as one man fighting a landfill. The following chapter and case picks up with Jerry Brown now involved in creating the Coosa River Basin Initiative due to his realization that water pollution does not respect political boundaries. This representation of interacting cases might at first be frustrating to a reader because of the inundation of names, but after the first chapter, the names become familiar as the reader learns one of the major factors of environmental activism: there are simply not enough people involved. Throughout the book, Marshall provides evidence that environmental activists are too few, stretched too far. While the activists who migrate between organizations or splinter off to form their own do share knowledge and experience gained from their previous activities, there are too few of them and in some of the case studies the daunting task of opposition is seen to wear on them.

Two other major strengths of Marshall's piece are her sources and her identification of problems inherent in policy and regulatory agencies. The resources Marshall plumbs demonstrate the vastness of her research. She not only employs the usual suspects such as court cases, newspapers, legislation, and journals, she also uses interviews, records of organizations, and her own personal experience. The final case study involves an organization she is directly involved with, of which she becomes a board member during her research. It is a little disturbing when the reader encounters the switch to first-person narrative, but it is an ingenious way to drive home the necessity of everyone becoming involved.

Problems faced by environmental activists range from needing technical experience to wading through legal jargon, and might include fighting one's way through a horrendous entanglement of bureaucracy. The case studies chosen by Marshall represent all of these problems and more. The two most prevalent issues, that seem to affect all of the case studies, are management policy and governmental agency bureaucracy. The narrative clearly presents frustration on the part of activists as they repeatedly identify problems with management pol-

icy, such as the biological diversity devastation caused by replanting single species like the Plantation Pine. In many of the cases, the activists were ignored when they presented field research because the current management philosophy was geared toward supporting something other than wilderness preservation–an example being the drive to increase hunting, which included management practices to increase sport species at the expense of biodiversity.

Bureaucracy proves to be difficult for activists to overcome. In one case study, an activist actually ambushed a politician on the campaign trail because several requests for a meeting were ignored. Another case provided the epitome in bureaucracy, one which would have made most people give up. The activist obtained a meeting with a local official, who in turn referred the activist up the chain of command. Once the activist had made it to the top of the chain, at the federal level, he was informed that the person responsible for decision making was in fact the very first person the activist had spoken to at the local level. The insights and pitfalls presented by these various case studies would prove a valuable read to any activist, or at least a forewarning of what they might encounter.

Pleasantly surprising to find in this text is Marshall's representation of activists frustration with policy normally perceived to be designed to help the environment. The discourse on NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) provides the reader with a new take on this policy. Instead of being lauded as the touchstone for environmental policy, the reader sees problems and pitfalls in the fine print. Limitations on public comment periods, public notification loopholes, and restrictions placed upon activists who do not act within the appropriate time frame are aggravating legalities that plague the success of many groups. This realistic presentation leaves the reader wondering why proponents of industry lament NEPA.

Marshall's concluding chapter serves to stress the importance of democratic participation. She uses the chapter to provide current information on the organizations and activists she featured in her text. This not only serves to bring the book full circle and provide closure to the reader, but it also allows the reader to refocus on the problems faced by the activists and to remember that water pollution affects all.

Besides being an engaging, descriptive, narrative of environmental activist case studies, Marshall's selections provide three major questions for the reader to ponder. Why do we as a nation deal with pollution in political boundaries when natural resources span multiple jurisdictions? How is it that the people accepted the idea of legal pollution? What is the true purpose of regulatory agencies, to protect the people or to rubber stamp applications to pollute within legal definitions?

This reviewer hopes that Marshall's readers take these questions to heart and seriously ponder and act upon any answers they find. Suzanne Marshall's piece provides a narrative riddled with questions, problems, and frustrations, but it also provides insight for future actions and does the ever most important thing a book can do: make the reader think!

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