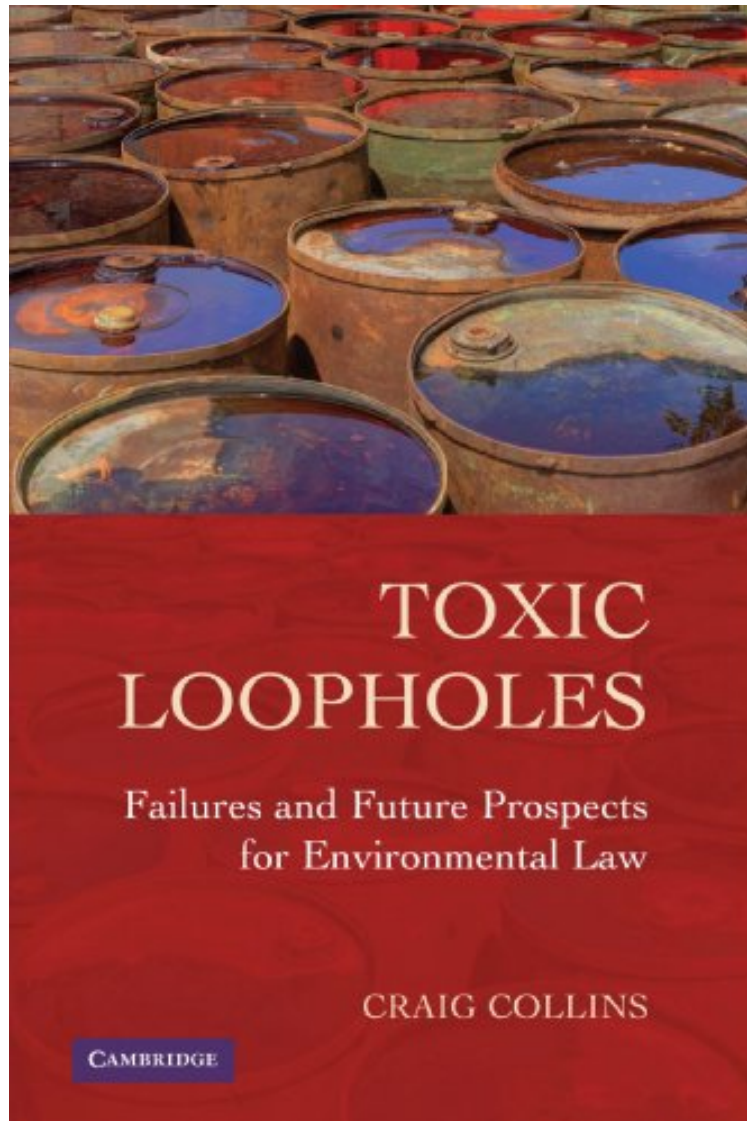


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Toxic Loopholes: Failures and Future Prospects for Environmental Law

Craig Collins

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Craig Collins : Toxic Loopholes: Failures and Future Prospects for Environmental Law before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Toxic Loopholes: Failures and Future Prospects for Environmental Law:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Excellent overview tells it like it isBy AndreaExcellent overview for

people who are new to Environmental law and who want to know the truth. This book gets to the point. 11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Toxic Loopholes By G. Bagakis In the first few pages of Toxic Loopholes the author poses 2 questions he intends to answer: "How well are our major environmental laws working?" "What prevents them from achieving their stated goals?" This book provided insightful, provocative answers to both questions by examining the real life stories of communities across America trying to gain the assistance of the law and the EPA to clean up their land, air and water. Toxic Loopholes arrives at a perfect time in history. Although the media provides more environmental coverage than ever before, most people still believe we have effective laws and government agencies that will shield them from pollution. By using real life examples and powerful facts, Toxic Loopholes convinced me that this is simply not so. This is the only book I'm aware of that thoroughly de-mystifies the environmental protection process. It clearly explains the fatal flaws in our environmental laws and exposes the extreme malfeasance of agencies like the EPA that are supposed to enforce them. Toxic Loopholes is engaging but disturbing to read. It is full of fascinating stories with scoundrels and heroes. For example, it chronicled the courageous efforts of Robert Martin and Hugh Kaufman who used their position as EPA Ombudsman to expose the corrupt relationship between EPA bosses and corporate polluters, who were allowed to get away without cleaning up the communities they poisoned. It also revealed the vindictive response of successive EPA chiefs--like Christie Todd Whitman--who did everything in their power to silence, intimidate and eventually eliminate the Ombudsman's office after Martin and Kaufman exposed her lie that the toxic air around ground zero was safe to breathe only 3 days after the twin towers collapsed. I was pleased that the book looked at both domestic and international efforts to protect the planet. The extensive chapter on the politics of climate change provided a comparison of several contending views on whether nations can cooperate to solve such global problems. Then it tested the validity of these views by examining two case studies: the successful ozone treaty and the floundering negotiations to prevent climate disruption. The author's conclusions were both sobering and eye-opening. The careful research that went into Toxic Loopholes was informed by historical analysis, political theory, realpolitik, ecology, economic theory, and environmental ethics. In addition, it contained some clear-headed prescriptions for ecological improvement without pretending that our society can become ecologically sustainable unless it abandons the relentless pursuit profit and growth. This well researched text provides readers with a systematic analysis of the history, politics, failures and occasional triumphs of our environmental laws. His discussion about the necessity of preserving biodiversity, the importance of the precautionary principle and four theories framing the prospects for global environmental cooperation were alone worth reading the text. 8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Toxic Eye-Opener By Barbara A. Edwards Like most Americans I'd like to believe that the EPA is looking out for my health and protecting me from air and water borne hazards. I want to think that if something was really bad, it wouldn't be allowed. But if that were so, why are the reports about the continuing environmental decline of our air, water and land so frightening and heartbreaking 40 years after the formation of the EPA? Collins tells about people who have been grievously affected by the lack of protection from toxins and explains why and how they could come to be so harmed. I appreciate the accessible style of this book, with its clear explanations and understandable language while still thoroughly explaining the historical, legal and political journey that has gotten us to this state of environmental chaos, as well as his non-partisan stance that it is the system that protects environmental scofflaws and not just one party. In the last chapter, Toxic Loopholes highlights the roadblocks to a cooperative climate agreement and examines the prospects for overcoming them. In his conclusion, Toxic Loopholes speaks of the importance of adopting the precautionary principle which forces industry to bear the burden of proving that a substance is safe, instead of using the substance until it is proved that harm has been caused. As Collins asks, "Can we create a society that meets our needs without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same?"

The EPA was established to enforce the environmental laws Congress enacted during the 1970s. Yet today lethal toxins still permeate our environment, causing widespread illness and even death. Toxic Loopholes investigates these laws, and the agency charged with their enforcement, to explain why they have failed to arrest the nation's rising environmental crime wave and clean up the country's land, air, and water. This book illustrates how weak laws, legal loopholes, and regulatory negligence harm everyday people struggling to clean up their communities. It demonstrates that our current system of environmental protection pacifies the public with a false sense of security, dampens environmental activism, and erects legal barricades and bureaucratic barriers to shield powerful polluters from the wrath of their victims. After examining the corrosive economic and political forces undermining environmental law making and enforcement, the final chapters assess the potential for real improvement and the possibility of building cooperative international agreements to confront the rising tide of ecological perils threatening the entire planet.

About the Author Dr Craig Collins has authored articles on climate negotiations for AMBIO and the Clinton administration's environmental policies for Mother Jones. After teaching at Sonoma State University and the University of California, Davis in the early 1990s, he became part of the faculty at California State University East Bay, where he continues to teach environmental law and policymaking, Latin American politics, global political

economy, US foreign policy, and several other courses. As visiting faculty for the University of Pittsburgh's Semester at Sea program, Collins has lectured on world affairs, climate change negotiations, US foreign policy and Latin American politics aboard ship on the program's world tour and its tour of the Caribbean basin.