

ECOPOLITICS PODCAST: Additional Pedagogical Resources (Episode 11)

[Episode 11: Environmental Political Economy](#)

Overview: What is the relationship between capitalism and the environment? In this episode Dr. Laurie Adkin, Professor of Political Science at the University of Alberta, provides some answers by guiding us on a journey through the world of 'environmental political economy'.

Key Takeaways

- The field of environmental political economy seeks to understand the complex relationships between the environment and the structures of power and wealth in a society. In Canada, this includes an analysis of a political economic history built on resource extraction and environmental injustice.
- Canada has access to large areas of agricultural land, fresh water, and forests that will remain valuable in the emerging climate crisis for the wellbeing of people, animals, and the planet as “a basis for survival” (Dr. Laurie Adkin: 5:35-7:28).
- The Climate crisis will transform Canada through the migration of climate refugees, the creation of alternative economies, and the ending of fossil fuel extraction (upon which Canada has become so reliant).
- The articulation of alternatives to Canada’s current political economy is important. This requires solidarity between different intersectional communities, the slowing of capitalist growth, and the strengthening of democratic institutions.

Discussion Questions

1. Dr. Adkin notes Canada’s democratic institutions limit citizens' ability to shape environmental policy. What do you think healthy democratic institutions look like, and how might they facilitate good environmental policy?
2. Dr. Adkin calls for the incorporation of the “interests and needs of other species” and future generations into Canada’s policy-making process. What might that look like?
3. What is your own individual “economic and social power”?

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Learn more about our Guest

Dr. Laurie Adkin

- <https://apps.ualberta.ca/directory/person/ladkin>

Select articles, books and videos

- **Adkin, Laurie E.** “Technology innovation as a response to climate change: The case of the Climate Change Emissions Management Corporation of Alberta.” *Review of Policy Research* vol. 36, no. 5 (2019).
- **Adkin, Laurie.** *First World Petro-Politics : The Political Ecology and Governance of Alberta* Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 2018.
- **Adkin, Laurie E.** “Crossroads in Alberta: Climate Capitalism or Ecological Democracy.” *Socialist Studies* vol. 12, no. 1 (Spring 2017), 2-31.
- Climate Strike Canada. “Just Recovery Teach-In and Panel Discussion.” Facebook Live. September 18 2020. <https://fb.watch/6uRxAntGWd/>

Some Projects Dr. Adkin has been involved with:

- Alberta Climate Dialogue <https://www.albertaclimatedialogue.ca/about-abcd>
- Corporate Mapping Project <https://www.corporatemapping.ca>

Explore resources mentioned in this episode:

- **Adkin, Laurie E.** *Environmental Conflict and Democracy in Canada* Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009.
- Daly, Herman E. *Steady-State Economics* 2nd ed. Washington, D.C: Island Press, 1991
- Gorz, André. *Critique of Economic Reason* London: Verso, 1989.
- Lipietz, Alain. *Towards a New Economic Order: Postfordism, Ecology, and Democracy* Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992.

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Learn more about Environmental and Ecological Democracy

- Dryzek, John S. *Deliberative Democracy and Beyond: Liberals, Critics, and Contestations*. Oxford University Press. 2002.
- Eckersley, Robyn. "Ecological Democracy and the Rise and Decline of Liberal Democracy: Looking Back, Looking Forward." *Environmental Politics*. Vol 29 (2). 2020.

Learn more about Consumption, Capitalism and Environmental Crisis

- Ellwood, Wayne. 2014. *No-Nonsense Guide to Degrowth & Sustainability*. Oxford: New Internationalist.
- Francoise Gollain (2016) "André Gorz: wage labour, free time and ecological reconstruction" *Green Letters*. 20:2, 127-139
- Stephanie Kaza, "How Much is Enough?: Buddhist Perspectives on Consumerism" in *How Much is Enough?: Buddhism, Consumerism, and the Human Environment*. Richard K. Payne, ed. Wisdom Publications: Somerville MA, 2010: 39-61.