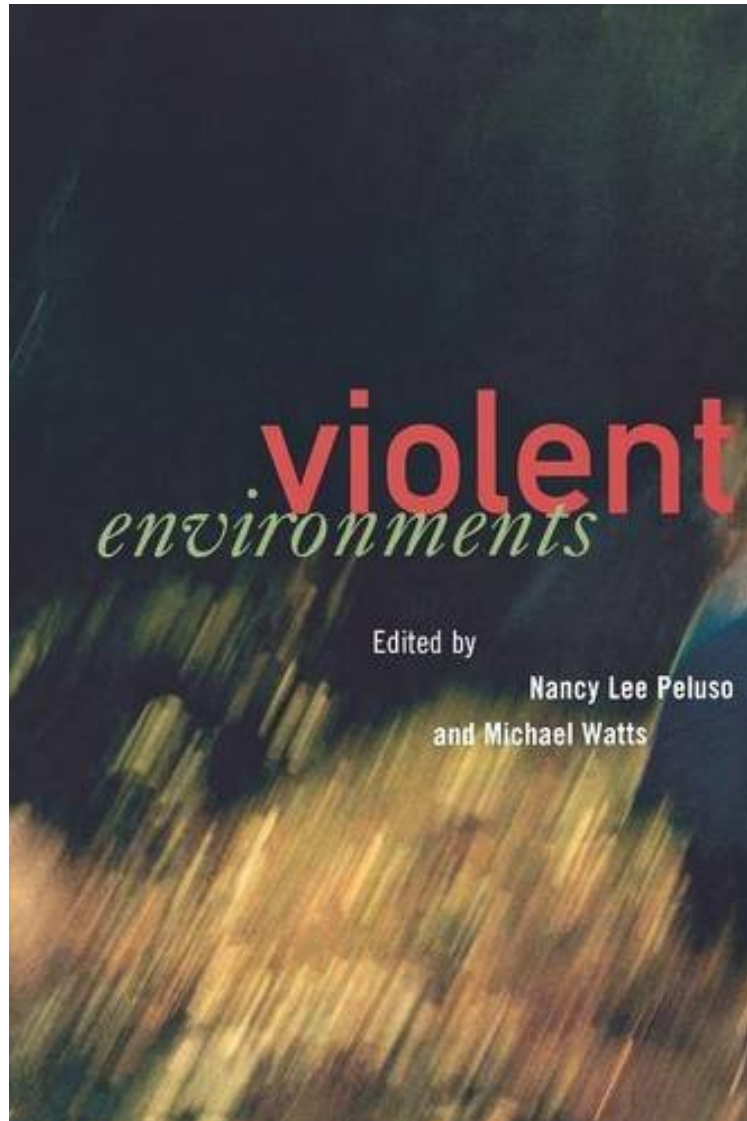


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Violent Environments

From Nancy Lee Peluso
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#1713100 in Books Nancy Lee Peluso 2001-08-09 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.32 x 1.09 x 6.38l, 1.44 #File Name: 0801487110464 pages Violent Environments | File size: 34.Mb

From Nancy Lee Peluso : Violent Environments before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Violent Environments:

10 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Nice book that demonstrates why environmental conflicts can turn into violence By Yurdi Yasmi I bought this book long time ago, just a few weeks after it got published. The first reason I bought it because the title was so "sexy" and more importantly it relates very much to my field of interest. "Violent Environment" in principle rejects the neo-Malthusian way of looking at environmental conflict. Neo-Malthusian

scholars such as Homer-Dixon and Kaplan argue that violence emerges due to scarcity of renewable resource such as forests, lands, water, etc. The scarcity induces marginalization and heightens competition. Explicitly Peluso and Watts, the authors of this book, argue that this way of looking at environmental problems and violent is flawed in many ways. They reject simplistic view and the automatic/linear relationship between scarcity and environmental conflict. They argue that there is much more than scarcity that can explain environmental conflict. For them conflict is a phenomenon that can be understood by looking at the interplay between local and extra local factors. Conflict is embedded in the historical context and wider processes that take place at higher level. Environment is an arena upon which stakeholders attach value, contest claims, struggle for legitimacy, etc. Thus, environmental conflict cannot be reduced to scarcity alone, it must be understood within the web of social, historical and political contexts and the interrelations among them. They propose an alternative approach, so called "Political Ecology" approach in order to comprehensively understand the complexity of issues involved in environmental violence. The books present many cases from all over the world. There is a case on violent conflict among the Dayak and the Madurese in West Kalimantan. There is a case on conflict over diamond in Africa and a lot more. The cases enhance our understanding that conflict is not only induced by scarcity. Resource abundance and process of environmental rehabilitation can equally result in conflict. While I enjoy the book very much, I would have loved to see another subject that seems to be overlooked. I do not see the discussion on how conflict escalates. Out of these cases, I could imagine we could draw some conclusions on the patterns of escalation. Why is it so important to know this? I think for effective conflict management we need to have a good understanding on escalation and factors that induce the escalation. If we know the patterns, we may be able to devise anticipative approach and proactive effective strategies for managing those conflicts. Unfortunately, the book does not pay attention to this. Otherwise, I recommend this book to those interested in the study of conflict and conflict management. Good also for students, lecturers and researchers.

Do environmental problems and processes produce violence? Current U.S. policy about environmental conflict and scholarly work on environmental security assume direct causal links between population growth, resource scarcity, and violence. This belief, a staple of governmental decision-making during both Clinton administrations and widely held in the environmental security field, depends on particular assumptions about the nature of the state, the role of population growth, and the causes of environmental degradation. The conventional understanding of environmental security, and its assumptions about the relation between violence and the environment, are challenged and refuted in *Violent Environments*. Chapters by geographers, historians, anthropologists, and sociologists include accounts of ethnic war in Indonesia, petro-violence in Nigeria and Ecuador, wildlife conservation in Tanzania, and "friendly fire" at Russia's nuclear weapons sites. *Violent Environments* portrays violence as a site-specific phenomenon rooted in local histories and societies, yet connected to larger processes of material transformation and power relations. The authors argue that specific resource environments, including tropical forests and oil reserves, and environmental processes (such as deforestation, conservation, or resource abundance) are constituted by and in part constitute the political economy of access to and control over resources. *Violent Environments* demands new approaches to an international set of complex problems, powerfully arguing for deeper, more ethnographically informed analyses of the circumstances and processes that cause violence.

"Provides both a critique of the school of environmental security and alternative ways of understanding the connections between environment and science." *Book News*, January 2002 "*Violent Environments* is a thought-provoking. . . volume that should be read carefully by all those interested in the various debates over environmental security. Many of the book's theoretical arguments and empirical findings provide important and timely challenges to mainstream approaches to studying the environment-violence nexus. Neo-Malthusian critics will find much to build upon in their efforts to develop a more systematic political economy/political ecology alternative." Colin Kahl, University of Minnesota, *Environmental Change and Security Project Report*, Issue 8, 2002 "This book calls for a bold new fusion of a multifaceted political economy with environmental and cultural politics to address the real landscapes of violence. Opening up a vast new arena for debate, discussion, and political action, *Violent Environments* establishes convincing grounds for a thorough rethinking of the subject. The critique it offers is both compelling and desperately needed." Karl S. Zimmerer, University of Wisconsin "This important book offers a topical, richer and more complex approach to understanding the connections between population and the environment than does the current conventional wisdom. With a healthy variety of case studies and a focus both on a wide range of environmental topics and on the diverse forms of violence associated with environmental relations, *Violent Environments* is a unique and provocative collection." Philip McMichael, Cornell University, author of *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective* About the Author Nancy Lee Peluso is Professor of Society Environment and is currently the Henry J. Vaux Distinguished Professor of Forest Policy in the Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and Management at the University of California, Berkeley. She brings approaches from critical political ecology to her research on forests, small-scale gold mining, migration, and other influences on agrarian change. Michael Watts is Class of 1963 Professor of Geography and Development Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. He is coeditor of *Violent*

Environments, also from Cornell, author most recently of *Curse of the Black Gold*, and coauthor of *Afflicted Powers*.