*American Studies, Ecocriticism, and Citizenship: Thinking and Acting in the Local and Global Commons*. Edited by Joni Adamson and Kimberly N. Ruffin. Foreword by Philip J. Deloria. New York and London: Routledge, 2013. 270 pp. Hardcover $145.00, E-Book $112.00, E-Rental $40.88.

Joni Adamson and Kimberly N. Ruffin’s landmark collection models a valuable critical approach by intersecting humanities and social science ecocriticism to show how ecological citizenship impacts our common futurity. *ISLE* readers and scholars who consider the collection’s fifteen chapters will find carefully-wrought arguments that illuminate examples of the varying “scales of citizenship” traversing bioregions and geopolitical borders, and civic-minded advocacy efforts that address environmental injustices (xvii). The text’s overall contribution is an analysis of “the conflicting definitions of who (or what) can have access to ‘citizenship’ and ‘rights’” (Title Page). One major strength derives from its editorial apparatus, which analogizes Darwin’s tangled bank (mentioned in Philip J. Delorian’s “Foreword”) by employing foundational American Studies’ field genealogies in a “methodological commons” of literary and social science analyses, interviews, art, digital sites, surveys, and case studies (16). The uniformly strong chapters are well-researched, theoretically-dense, and geographically diverse examples of how multi-scalar forms of citizenship intersect with the environment.

Adamson and Ruffin’s “Introduction” is a rich summary noting how the trajectory of the American Studies Association intersected with the rise of ASLE. By cataloging how transnational ethnic and postcolonial studies revealed the heteronormative limitations of historical American ecocriticism, their editorial selections are guided by Berlant’s notions of the power dynamics inherent in geopolitical belonging (3). The collection utilizes Adamson’s interdisciplinary, cross-cultural approach, along with Ruffin’s human groups’ theory, to underscore how the notion of belonging has triangulated as a central discourse in American and ethnic ecocriticism. Emerging AS scholars, or ones new to ecocriticism, will find this section extremely useful in understanding the field’s evolution and its current priorities.

The text’s first part treats ideologies of citizenship and belonging, examining how marginalized populations and landscapes are negotiated through geopolitical power structures. For instance, Susan Scott Parrish’s opening chapter argues that Zora Neale Hurston’s texts reveal an environmental ethics based on historical dominations of American southern and Caribbean marginalized populations. In a similar vein, Karen Salt’s study reveals how nineteenth-century Presidential politics used “place-branding” to recruit African Americans in Haiti’s “racialized citizenship” schemes (40). Michael Ziser’s valuable chapter uses art, literature, surveys, television and film to decenter the alignment of oil with desert locales in cultural imaginaries. Jeffrey Myers cautions against wide-scale, digitalized environmental humanities projects that promote wilderness nostalgias embedded in racialized, anti-urban futurities. Sarah Wald’s analysis shows how Japanese American voices in post-redress literary narratives embody alternative forms of belonging outside traditional nationalisms.

The second part of *American Studies, Ecocriticism and Citizenship* embodies Claudia Sadowski-Smith’s notion of “border ecologies” by examining human embeddedness in cultural, racial, and species’ hierarchies. John Gamber’s chapter explores Assiniboine (or Stone Sioux) William S. Yellow Robe, Jr.’s play *The Council,* which focuses on alternative concepts of animal nations. Gamber’s important intervention marks the contemporary issues in Native American Studies surrounding the tribal literary nationalism of indigenous peoples, and it interrogates the historic ideological biases of national *and* human exceptionalisms. Julie Sze examines Kem Nunn’s and Linda Hogan’s literary texts that narrate how US border polices promote gender-based environmental injustice. Claudia Sadowski-Smith’s comparative analysis of US/Mexico and US/Canada borders is enfolded within a literary analysis of Jim Lynch’s *Border Songs*. Her contribution addresses a deficiency in American Studies’ scholarship, namely how geopolitical demarcations affect boundary ecologies.

The collection’s final part embodies Nixon’s scholar activist approach by profiling ecological citizenship in action. Sun-Hee Park and Naguib Pellow’s archival research and interviews uncover how environmental privilege leads to politically-sanctioned forms of “nativist environmentalism” (179) that discriminates against poor residents. Their research also underscores the US environmental movement’s apathy towards racial justice, what Gamber terms “whitestream” environmentalism (112). The last two chapters—Giovanna Di Chiro’s profile of The Asian Communities for Reproductive Justice and Stephanie LeMenager’s profile of urban natures in the LA Urban Rangers Art Collective—offer succinct examples of trailblazing advocacy.

In its second edition, this volume should offer a paperback version, and incorporate American Studies’ perspectives deriving from age and disability discourses. Overall, I think the collection serves as a benchmark for future ecocritical scholarship in American, ethnic, and women’s and gender studies’. It’s also a useful and diverse pedagogical tool for upper level and graduate courses.

Sophie Christman Lavin

SUNY Stony Brook University