

this is a failure—individual and collective—of political imagination. Our inertial imagination can be challenged, and perchance changed, by a close and careful reading of ancient authors, Plato in particular. Part III is concerned with the need for individual initiative in reimagining our present predicament so as to change our ways of thinking and thus of acting.

Unlike many (most?) books by environmentalists or green political theorists, Lane's is "primarily concerned with human-to-human interactions rather than with our relation to the natural world" (p. 15). And that is because we cannot begin to change our too-often destructive and unsustainable relation to the natural world until we change our relations with each other. Ancient authors, Plato pre-eminent among them, employed a number of concepts that we would do well to reappropriate. Each virtue (*arete*) has a corresponding vice, and each vice a corresponding virtue. To begin with the vices: One is *pleonexia*, "literally grasping-for-more, meaning an immoderate overreaching for more than one's share" (p. 32). Another is *hubris*. Usually translated (not entirely satisfactorily) as "pride," hubris is an overweening arrogance, a misplaced confidence in one's talents, abilities, and knowledge.

You need not look far to find examples of modern *pleonexia*: rampant consumerism is a particularly prominent one; the mania for economic growth at all costs is another. To the question, "How much is enough?" too many of us answer that one can never have enough. Lane is not lambasting consumption or economic growth as such but greedy and immoderate "pleonectic consumption" and growth. The virtue corresponding to and contrasting with the vice of *pleonexia* is *sophrosune*, typically translated as "moderation" or "temperance"—Lane prefers "self-discipline"—and it is in rather short supply in our modern capitalist-consumerist society. Yet, it is sorely needed, now more than ever, since the root of the recent financial collapse and our myriad ecological crises are one and the same (pp. 120–24). Where self-discipline is absent, external regulation is required; but the psyche of the pleonectic or immoderate person will resist even that (sound familiar?).

Lane invokes repeatedly the image-story of Plato's cave. Briefly, Plato has Socrates construct an allegory about prisoners in a cave, chained fast so that they cannot turn around to see the fire that burns brightly behind them. They mistake the shadows on the wall in front of them for reality. That is what they are accustomed to seeing and believing. Then one day a prisoner manages to escape and to make his way out of the cave, where he sees real objects in the bright light of the sun. He reenters the darkness of the cave to tell his fellow prisoners that they have been deluded all their lives; they have mistaken appearance for reality. But, far from appreciating the truth, they call the escapee crazy and would, if they could, kill him. The lone enlightened prisoner is like the philosopher who earns the

enmity of others by asking discomfiting questions. Lane uses this allegory to illustrate "inertia"—the comfortable conventional wisdom to which the prisoners subscribe that renders them docile and inactive—and the lone prisoner's escape and return exemplifies "initiative"—the idea that one person's action can potentially make a difference by educating and enlightening others. To make such a difference requires risking ridicule and rejection. But, nothing ventured, nothing gained, at least as concerns the transformation of our collective imagination. It once seemed unimaginable that slavery would be abolished or that women would one day enjoy the same rights as men; but small bands of abolitionists and suffragettes dared to imagine just that—and to overcome inertia by taking initiative—and our world has been transformed for the better.

We are in dire need, Lane contends, of just such a transformation in environmental matters, and this must begin in imagination—not only our individual imagination but our shared or collective imagination. Each underwrites and reinforces the other. Plato, the philosopher of the most vivid and expansive imagination, can help: first of all, by his own very bracing example, and second by helping us to think about and reimagine the relationship between polis and psyche, city and soul. Plato was hardly alone in contending that each mirrors and reinforces the other. Those who live in a sick city—one that values pleonectic overreaching and rewards outsized pride—are themselves likely to be sick and to further contribute to the sickness of their city. Among the questions Plato poses is how to heal a sick city and the sick souls who inhabit it. One problem is that pleonectic and hubristic people don't know (or understand) that their souls are sick or that greed and pride are soul-diseases. They can discover this, Lane argues, with the help of a knowledgeable and skilled diagnostician. Enter Dr. Plato. A close, careful, and sympathetic reading of his *Republic* will help us begin the road to recovery. What Lane does, in effect, is to help us read and begin to understand that charmingly complex work, and in a way that will lead us to live our lives as thoughtful stewards and citizens of an environmentally sustainable society.

Fighting for the Future of Food: Activists versus Agribusiness in the Struggle over Biotechnology.

By Rachel Schurman and William A. Munro. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2010. 296p. \$22.50.

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The connections between food security and political stability are now part of the global political discourse. It is widely acknowledged, for example, that the 2007–08 food price spikes played a key role in triggering political unrest in the Arab world. Though important, such broad assertions do not offer a deep understanding of the ways in

which long-term political controversies surrounding food emerge, unfold, and get resolved.

Fighting for the Future of Food provides a vivid account of the controversy surrounding agricultural biotechnology. Using carefully assembled information, the authors show how a relatively small group of activists managed to shift public perception against the biotechnology industry. According to the book, they did so by taking advantage of political opportunities created by the culture of the industry itself.

This work differs from many others in the field in several respects. First, it offers a conceptual framework for understanding the dynamics of the controversy. Second, it uses case studies of activities across the world (Europe, the United States, and Africa) to demonstrate both the validity of the conceptual framework and the global nature of the debate.

In essence, the debate is framed in the context of the different cultural predispositions of different social groups throughout the world. The book illustrates the clash of worldviews, or how “shared mental worlds involve sets of beliefs, assumptions, images, and value judgments about how the world works (and should work), as well as ways of thinking and categorizing things” (p. xvi). The authors stress that it is not enough simply to share worldviews. The activists were able to articulate their *lifeworld*, which involved transforming their cultural dispositions into political action, including the leveraging of wider social circles and epistemic communities to support their cause.

This analytical approach is not in itself an original contribution to scholarship. It builds on a long tradition of sociology, which the authors themselves acknowledge. What is important, however, is the way they use the framework to help bring out the strategies, tactics, and other measures that biotechnology critics and corporations used to articulate their position. This is an important contribution, and the book does an excellent job of documenting the dynamics of the debate.

Equally important is the care with which the book documents the historical evolution of the debate. This historical information is important because it helps to explain the roots of some of the tactics used by both sides to promote their interests. But it also provides a basis upon which to judge sources of some of the cultural predispositions that influenced the contents of the debate.

In this respect, the book makes two important contributions to scholarship. First, it demonstrates that the biotechnology debate is not an ephemeral event but an important element in our understanding of divergent views regarding the future of food. But, more importantly, it shows that there is sufficient historical material to allow scholars to explore the deeper theoretical implications of the debate. So far, much of the work on the debate has been limited to narrower issues, such as technical feasibility, labeling, coexistence with nonbiotechnol-

ogy crops, and safety. In this respect, the book is an important departure point for exploring other aspects of the biotechnology debate, as well as new fields in the food debate.

The biotechnology debate has been associated with extensive reforms in public policy. As the authors illustrate, biotechnology activists have had significant influence on biotechnology policy design in Europe, Africa, and other parts of the world. Their analytical framework helps to examine the extent to which the successes gained by biotechnology critics can be sustained. It is interesting to note that the book raises important doubts regarding their ability to sustain opposition in light of steady, though uncertain, biotechnology adoption. By taking an inflexible position, the activists may have imposed limits on their own ability to envisage alternative agricultural futures.

Despite its strengths, there are three important limitations for the book. First, reliance on lifeworlds as a theoretical framework helps to explain how the debates were structured and articulated. But the book does not help the reader to understand the forces that shaped the dominant worldviews on both sides of the argument. More specifically, vested interests and incumbent or emerging industries played a critical role in shaping the worldviews of the adversaries. By understanding the underlying socioeconomic forces, one is able to gain a deeper appreciation of the role played by other, less visible actors.

For example, the first generation of biotechnology product promised specifically to reduce the use of pesticides. There is a large community of economic and political interests that shaped the debates in a variety of ways. European governments, for example, were not simply being pressured into action by activists but were active in championing certain policies at the national and international levels. Although such dynamics are acknowledged in the book, their role is diminished by the lack of a detailed analysis of the extent to which vested socioeconomic interests shape lifeworlds.

The nascent organic farming industry played an equally active role, and its position was influenced by economic interests. It can be argued that the labeling rules promoted by the industry were a tool for defining its economic space. Debates about labeling are presented as an issue of transparency and the “right-to-know,” but deeper economic interests are equally at play, though masked by more populist demands.

The second limitation of the book lies in the presentation of the debate as a fight between two adversaries with clearly defined lifeworlds. In actuality, the antibiotechnology movement comprised a diversity of actors addressing agricultural, consumer, and environmental affairs. Similarly, corporate interests were also divided and hardly spoke with one voice. Although both sides identified specific

champions as their targets, the existence of such flag bearers should not be confused with uniformity in positions. An understanding of the variations within each lifeworld might provide future opportunities for resolving some of the debates—a point to which the book itself alludes.

Finally, although the authors explore possible future directions for biotechnology, they limit their sources of ideas by not examining why, despite intense debates, other regions of the world have continued to adopt biotechnology at rapid rates. While the debate raged in Europe, Latin America and Asia registered high uptakes. This was not done without controversy.

Some of the debates in countries such as India and Brazil showed the same dynamics as in other parts of the world. Opposition in those countries, however, did not have the same impact as it did in Europe. This is partly because of the emergence of strong constituencies that stood to gain economically from adopting the new technology. Moreover, the requisite infrastructure needed to support the adoption of biotechnology existed in Asia and Latin America, whereas it was lacking in Africa.

On the whole, *Fighting for the Future of Food* is a serious piece of scholarship that provides new insights into the global biotechnology debate. It brings much-needed scholarly rigor to a subject that will continue to shape future debates about global agriculture. The book is an important contribution to scholarship on social movements, protest, contention, and technological controversies. It has the potential to shape the design of future studies, as well as the design of public policies on agricultural innovation.

China's Environmental Challenges. By Judith Shapiro. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2012. 200p. \$69.95 cloth, \$22.95 paper. doi:10.1017/S1537592713000224

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In her recent book, Judith Shapiro provides an in-depth analysis of the political, economic, social, and cultural forces that shape China's environmental governance. Shapiro applies key concepts familiar to students of environmental politics such as globalization, governance, national identity, civil society, and environmental justice to shed light on the complex environmental challenges faced by Chinese society. The book presents a comprehensive analysis of China's environmental plight and should be of interest not only to China specialists, but also to those interested in understanding the environmental implications of China's rapid industrialization and the prospects for sustainable economic growth in China.

Shapiro begins by laying out the external and internal drivers of China's environmental challenges, such as globalization, population growth, industrialization, urbanization, climate change, and the rise of the middle class. She then proceeds to examine the institutional and legal frame-

work of China's environmental governance, the cultural and historical contexts that shape China's changing national identity, and the limits to civil society participation in China's environmental policymaking process. This examination is followed by discussions of the important issue of distributive justice associated with displacement of environmental harm and how future generations as well as underprivileged groups within Chinese society may bear disproportionate costs of China's environmental damage. The book concludes by discussing prospects for change and by emphasizing the world's common interests in China's sustainable development.

Shapiro identifies the globalization of production as one of the drivers of environmental change in China. Applying the "commodity chain analysis" to China's wood product exports, she shows how China's weak regulatory capacity impedes efforts to trace and verify the timber harvesting practices of the suppliers to Chinese manufacturers of intermediate wood products. While discussions of China's position in the global "chain of custody" shed light on an important aspect of China's role in global efforts to protect the environment, it would be beneficial if the author could give more attention to how international market integration influences China's *domestic* environmental politics and policy. For example, existing literature on the linkages between globalization and the environment suggests that the competitive race between local jurisdictions for foreign investment may lead to the so-called "regulatory chill" and exert downward pressure on the environment in the host country. However, it has also been suggested that trade and investment may help to "ratchet up" the environmental standards in a developing country such as China by transmitting more stringent environmental regulatory standards in advanced industrialized countries to Chinese jurisdictions. The book could more directly engage the ongoing debate about the so-called pollution havens and the race-to-the-bottom to provide a more detailed discussion of the various pathways through which globalization may affect China's environmental regulation.

The chapter on the role of the Chinese government in environmental management details the positive steps that Beijing has taken in recent years to promote sustainable development, in addition to emphasizing how Chinese government bureaucracies' overlapping jurisdictions have weakened the central government's ability to effectively implement and enforce environmental rules and regulations. This chapter does a good job describing how China's well-known system of "fragmented authoritarianism," with both a vertical hierarchy based on functional specialization and a competing horizontal level of authority based on territorial authority relationships as well as bureaucratic overlap and contradiction in the central government apparatus, complicates the central government's ability to implement environmental laws and regulations.