

Martin, S., Taylor, R. B., and Mason, R. (2001). Three perspectives on environmental justice: Sociological criminal justice, and political. Paper presented at the annual meetings of the Eastern Sociological Society, Philadelphia, March.

ABSTRACT:

The concept of environmental justice, evolving from closely related notions of environmental equity and environmental racism, can be understood from a variety of perspectives. In this paper, we choose to discuss three distinct and only partially overlapping perspectives on environmental justice: the social, the political, and the criminal justice. Although discrepancies among the three make it difficult to agree on the extent to which environmental injustices currently take place, or which policies will be most effective at promoting greater justice, each of them can provide guidance to theoreticians and practitioners. We discuss the meanings and operationalizations of environmental justice within each perspective and also consider the practical uses as well as inherent limitations of each perspective. We conclude by recognizing the distinct value of each perspective and arguing against melding them into a unified framework.

KEY WORDS: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, SOCIOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK,
POLITICAL FRAMEWORK, CRIMINAL JUSTICE FRAMEWORK