

Special Issue vol 7, 2018:

Education for Social and Environmental Justice

Coordination: Irene Moreno-Medina, Marian Suavita y Guillermina Belavi

Call for papers

The concept of Environmental Justice emerged between the 1970s and 1980s in the United States through the grassroots activism of different groups and movements who belonged to disadvantaged classes. Both, the civil rights movement and the Native Americans, as well as the labor movement, the agricultural workers and the immigrant groups (Cole and Foster 2001, Faber and McCarthy 2003, Scholsberg 2007) incorporated environmental issues among their struggles's reasons. But these groups even though heterogeneous, shared a rationale and foundation: the ecological problems can not be separated from social injustices. Indeed, during those years it became evident that socio-economically or culturally disadvantaged people suffer an unequal burden both from negative environmental impacts and from the positive implications derived from the application of environmental norms and policies (Arriaga and Buendía, 2011). Since then, the Enviromental Justice paradigm extended the environmental movement considerations incorporating issues of social justice and equity into their approaches (Agyeman, 2007).

The experience of social struggles has also clarified the debate in relation to the environmental issues in a second direction, because in addition to recognizing that the environmental aspect can not be separated from social justice, it has made it clear that the Justice issue does not end in the distributive task (Scholsberg, 2004). While the theoretical reflection on Environmental Justice dominates a liberal approach, which focuses its criticism on the way in which the distribution of environmental goods and damages proceed, in their claims and struggles the social movements demand to take into account, in turn, aspects of recognition and participation. Considering that the recognition is not only something to be distributed but a relationship and a social norm (Young, 1990) and that exists also a direct link between the lack of recognition and the decrease in the participation, then a notion of justice should be adopted that transcends the limited conceptions in the distributional aspect and that incorporates recognition and participation as overlapping and interrelated elements (Fraser, 2008).

From this conception, we know that Environmental Justice has a redistributive aspect — related to the distribution of environmental goods and damages—, a recognition aspect — which requires respect for the different cultures— and an aspect of participation —which claims the right to take part in environmental decisions— (Scholsberg, 2004). In fact, the lack of recognition is a essential element that has in itself damages to the nature. The global

economy imposes patterns of homogeneous production and consumption that ignore the cultural diversity, the different forms of life, of production and consumption, the knowledge emerging from the communities and rooted of communal identities to the land (Shiva, 1997, 2003). This has devastating effects on culture and the environment, because it destroys sustainable forms of life. There are even extreme cases, such as those of indigenous peoples where the struggle for recognition and Environmental Justice is directly associated with their own cultural survival. Also, there is a fundamental relationship between social, cultural and ecological devastation and the lack of democratic participation in the institutions that establish the global patterns of government. In fact, behind the decisions that infringe the redistribution and recognition aspects of Environmental Justice, is the lack of participation that characterizes the institutions which take these decisions.

What can the education do in relation to Environmental Justice? If the commitment to Environmental Justice is deep and real, then the question will also be valid with its inverted terms because Environmental Justice, conceived from the framework set, leads to rethink and redefine the role of education. Historically, the main task of the school was linked to the transmission of a knowledge and customs legacy highly valued by society, remaining exposed to the transcendent task of perpetuation. However, it is the same society which even with the—or despite the— legacy that it considers appropriate to transmitting, has put its own habitat on the brink of destruction. In this way, the Environmental Justice questions the dominant objectives in schools, the traditional emphasis on passive assimilation and the reproduction of knowledge in a simplistic way, even when it responds at the same conservative purpose of the school, but nowadays it is not about the conservation of the particular way of life or a social order, but about the life itself on the planet and the conservation of resources for survival. Here, the Social Justice history imposes its mark too, since we have seen that if we follow its development line, Environmental Justice harmonises better in the context of the political activism of the environmental movement than with the mere transmission of knowledge about ecology. This idea proposes to education socially and politically critical goals. Social Justice requires that education be the development of an ideological and critical research in order to examine the different ideologies behind the patterns that dominate our link with nature and the environmental reform proposals (Stevenson, 2007).

From this broad view, we invite you to participate in the RIEJS issue "Education for Social and Environmental Justice", with contributions that help to reflect about education and improve the practices in our schools. RIEJS is at the service of a collective reflection that will help and inspire us to work together for a sustainable world.

Text Requirements:

Schedule

1. Deadline: September 15th 2017
2. Publication: Volume 7, 2018.

Procedure

1. The text must conform both the general requirements of the journal and the special issue.
2. The text can be sent written in Spanish, English or Portuguese.

3. The manuscript will be sent to F. Javier Murillo: javier.murillo@uam.es. Must be addressed: "to Special issue: Education for Social and Environmental Justice".
4. A mail replay will be sent to the authors of the proposals received.
5. Once the period for reception of the originals is finished, the editor of this special issue send to the double blind review process. No further than two months the decision of the reviewers a text requires minor adjustments or modifications for publication, author will be asked to do them within fifteen days resend to corrected version. If any opinion concludes that the text should not be published, the decision cannot be appealable.