

Book Review

Paradigm Wars: Indigenous Peoples Resistance to Globalization

Jerry Mander and Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Editors

San Francisco: Siera Club Books, 2006.

272 Pages.

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Paradigm Wars: Indigenous Peoples Resistance to Globalization examines current economic, political and social impacts on Indigenous Peoples. This book offers a critical analysis of conditions in Indigenous communities throughout the globe. The editors incorporate both Indigenous and non-Indigenous authors, allowing the reader to gain a perspective on forces of domination on Indigenous peoples. The title is an accurate description to a struggle between two opposing paradigms.

The International Forum on Globalization (IFG), established in 1994, is a research and educational institution composed of leading activists, scholars, economists, and other researchers who provide analyses and critiques on cultural, social, political, and environmental impacts by economic globalization. IFG was established to address the impact of restructuring global politics and economics by the corporate sector. There has been virtually no public debate of the global *free market* or *neoliberal* model, or of the institutions and agreements enforcing this system. In response, the IFG has stimulated new thinking, public education, and activities about global governance structures such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and other such bureaucracies. IFG's work is linked to social justice and environmental movements, providing critical understanding for civil society. IFG works with a leading edge international board of leaders – a net-

work of hundreds of associates and a dedicated staff that represents regions throughout the world. *Paradigm Wars* was born from these events.

The IFG produces numerous publications and during the last few years has launched a pioneering program that focuses on alternative visions and policies to globalization that are more just, equitable, democratic, and sustainable. The title of the book speaks for itself. In this global arena we are now able to reach the other side of the globe within seconds, minutes, and hours, whether it is through mass communications, mobile phones, the internet, or through air travel. A global expansion of trade, market economies, and communications has led to the imposition of foreign ideologies upon traditional Indigenous peoples, resulting in a clash of paradigms.

Editor Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, an Igorot woman from the Philippines, served as Chair of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (2006). Her unique perspective lends a greater understanding of the need for a paradigm shift in international and local relations. Jerry Mander is the founder of the International Forum on Globalization and the program director for the Foundation for Deep Ecology. Mander's mission is to educate and create awareness on the injustices experienced by Indigenous Peoples as well as to help us recognize the resistance within these communities (Mander & Tauli-Corpuz, 2006, p.6). Mander claims that the current pace of development is eventually going to self-destruct. This self-destruction will have the most impact on Indigenous Peoples who live in close connection to the earth.

Part two of this book introduces the reader to the technical process of globalization. Entitled *Globalization: Rules of the Game*, describes the leading forces in the continual progression of unsustainable development. The World Bank, the IMF, and the WTO are all defined and critiqued as institutions that impose structural adjustment programs and unjust demands upon developing countries.

The third part of this book, titled *Diverse Impacts on Indigenous Peoples*, provides the reader with both historical and current atrocities caused by foreign powers and their destructive developmental mentality. The article on Infrastructure Development in the Amazon by Janet Lloyd, Atossa Soltani, and Kevin King shows how the development of oil and hydroelectric dam projects has destroyed the people and their lands. In these areas, Indigenous peoples have been forced to relocate to less desirable lands and have been exposed to environmental waste which has led to illness and contamination.

Many are unable to survive these environmental assaults.

The most disturbing section of *Paradigm Wars* is the fourth section, which focuses on *Extractive Industries*. This portion of the book is a rather emotional read and a critical component to the whole. In this section, readers learn about appalling accounts of environmental abuse leading to human violence. The article, *Ogoni People of Nigeria versus Big Oil* by Oronto Douglas and Ike Okonta, members of the Ijaw group in Nigeria, is disturbing. The article introduces the reader to the corruption of global corporations such as the Royal Dutch Shell Oil Company. Shell has begun an ecological and economic war against the peoples of the Niger Delta over the past 60 years (Mander & Tauli-Corpuz, 2006, p. 153). The environmental destruction has literally left the Niger Delta devastated by oil spills, pollution, and waste dumping, ultimately affecting Ogoni livelihoods. A once self-sufficient people, relying on agriculture, sadly are now the victims of oil exploitation. The oil industry has caused a severe contamination of their water supply, has wiped out many plant species, and most devastating has created a drastic Indigenous alienation from traditional economies.

Lastly, section five of the book entitled *Turning Points* presents a more positive outlook on the future of Indigenous livelihood, and focuses on activism and social movements, and what can and must be done in the future in order to establish thriving, healthy and sustainable Indigenous communities. It also focuses on the necessity to create awareness within developed countries, in terms of lifestyle, consciousness, and consumption levels. It leaves one with more aware of how and where everything we use, eat, and purchase was produced and the impact our lifestyle has on the rest of the world.

Paradigm Wars exposes the injustices currently taking place throughout the globe. The reader is moved by the devastating impact of development on Indigenous peoples. *Paradigm Wars* is a powerful book and has the ability to convince the reader to shift their perspective and become a solution rather than a problem in the challenge of sustainable development. Jerry Mander and Victoria Tauli-Corpuz's goal is to re-shape Westerners views of materialism, and raise global consciousness of the injustices faced by Indigenous Peoples and their lands. Tauli-Corpuz and Mander have also set the stage for continued research in this area. *Paradigm Wars* has a great readability factor, is educational, informative, and it is urgent that we read it.

REFERENCES

- Mander, J., & Tauli-Corpuz, V. (2006). *Paradigm wars: Indigenous peoples' resistance to globalization*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books.
- United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. (2006). About Us. Retrieved on November 4 2008 from http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfi/en/member_tauli.html