

# Book Review

Reyes Mason, L., & Rigg, J. (Eds.). (2019). *People and climate change: Vulnerability, adaptation, and social justice*. Oxford.

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Social workers who have not considered climate change as a social justice issue will learn how closely the two are aligned by reading this book. The text brings together experts from across the globe outlining the impacts of climate on vulnerable populations and delineates policy strategies to promote resilience in adaptation to climate change.

Reyes Mason and Rigg frame the content beginning with the premise of joining the hard sciences to social science in order to solve the problem of climate impact. The authors link wealth and status to greater negative consequences to vulnerable populations and outline historical foundations in support of that assertion. This recurring theme centers on the greater impact on vulnerable populations and raises the social justice questions, which in turn highlight larger moral issues.

Using research as a base, the authors make the arguments that vulnerable groups—poor, female, older, and indigenous—have increased risk because of environmental hazards. The probability of risk to a group increases when hazards are combined with vulnerability. Hazards are described in terms of weather and land conditions. From extreme heat to the dangers of flooding, those who are of lower socioeconomic status are impacted at higher probability than those with wealth. The studies from multiple disciplines within the book cover areas such as Arizona, Argentina, England, and Indonesia and outline the range of factors leading to these negative outcomes.

Outlining “climate justice,” the authors contend we must create opportunities for full and meaningful participation in decision making, fair distribution of burdens and benefits, and recognition of status difference in the impact of climate change and the disasters which result. Resilience is described as the social, physical, and ecological measures taken by communities in response to variables associated with risk, vulnerability and changing climate.

The role of social workers as partners for policy change, community development efforts, and empowerment of marginalized groups as it relates to climate becomes clear as one progresses through the book. A great resource for educators in social work, the text brings together multiple disciplines, yet the connection to social work’s mission and obligations to social justice are clear. Aside from use in educational contexts, this text is useful for all social workers in understanding the impact of climate on those we work with at a micro level and provides strategies for policy change at a macro level. The global problem of climate change is one which cannot be ignored; reading this book will help those uninformed about the issue to advocate for vulnerable and oppressed groups as well as the wellbeing of our communities.