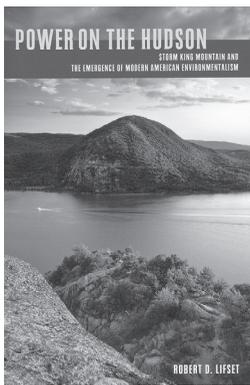


Dixon's understanding of the history of philosophy. For example, in his discussion of Colden's retreat to Coldenham, Dixon falls into broad generalizations of the influence of classical philosophy on early modern and colonial philosophers. Dixon stresses Stoic ideas over Epicurean. While Stoic ideas are perennial among philosophers, the influence of Epicurean philosophy on early modern and Enlightenment ideas is profound. Furthermore, Dixon presents George Berkeley, of whom Colden was a harsh critic, as an enemy of science. While Berkeley presents an alternative picture of the metaphysics of science, he was not an enemy of science. Berkeley held an instrumental view of science, according to which science explained the regularities and patterns of the world, but he was unwilling to take this any farther and recognize the existence of a material world with natural laws. However, these are relatively small criticisms of Dixon's important book, one that hopefully will increase attention to Colden's contributions to science, philosophy, and society.

James G. Snyder, Marist College



***Power on the Hudson: Storm King Mountain and the Emergence of Modern American Environmentalism*, Robert D. Lifset. (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014) 309pp.**

“The Hudson River Valley is beautiful,” Robert P. Lifset bluntly writes in *Power on the Hudson: Storm King Mountain and the Emergence of Modern American Environmentalism* (21). However in 1963 beauty was not enough to save Storm King Mountain from Consolidated Edison's proposed power plant. While scenic grandeur helped to protect many American landscapes in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centu-

ries, environmental protection in the 1960s and 1970s required quantifiable justification. Environmentalism needed to professionalize. Lifset's work follows the story of a grassroots environmental movement that embraced science to protect the Hudson River Valley's iconic mountain in ecological, rather than romantic, terms. This shift, Lifset argues, sets apart modern environmentalism from previous iterations of the movement. Additionally, the author believes the struggle for Storm King Mountain ultimately provided the scientific and legal framework to protect many other landscapes across the nation from industrialization in the late twentieth century.

Power on the Hudson is organized in three parts. The first section outlines the fracture of local environmental organizations over the growing concern for reliable energy. Americans in the 1960s became painfully aware of the ever-increasing demand for reliable energy production. Prices continuously rose in response to increasing consumption. The need for energy had never been so high, with the nation's energy production increasing 673 percent between 1949 and 1980 to meet growing demand (195). Companies

like Consolidated Edison needed to expand operations in order to meet public need. Longstanding conservation-based organizations such as the Palisades Interstate Park Commission (PIPC) and Hudson River Conservation Society (HRCS) struggled to justify outright opposition to the construction of the proposed power plant at Storm King Mountain. Lifset argues that these organizations faltered for two reasons. First, their ties to New York State politicians hindered them from serious opposition to a project that would bring jobs and energy to a large population of the region. Second, the conservation organizations weighed the aesthetics of Storm King Mountain against the social need for the plant to supply power to New York City. After short debate, the longstanding environmental groups, PIPC and HRCS, picked energy.

Lifset's environmental movement spawns from energy production rather than the usual suspects, industrial waste and chemical hazards. In this moment, a new organization, Scenic Hudson, fought to preserve Storm King Mountain. Its argument for preservation met intense criticism—even more so after the 1965 blackout that left nearly 30 million people without power. The group quickly learned that basing its case on the aesthetic qualities of the mountain did not provide enough evidence to hinder construction of the power plant. To protect Storm King Mountain, the organization employed the language of ecology to obstruct construction. This shift from aesthetics-based to ecological-based arguments serves as a quintessential turn in the modern environmental movement. By claiming that Consolidated Edison's proposed plant would kill large populations of striped bass, Scenic Hudson harnessed firm ecological evidence to oppose the power plant.

The second section of the text explores how the rise of modern environmentalism transformed environmental policy and legislation. Relying on new science-based arguments, Consolidated Edison and environmental groups entered into uncharted legal territory. Lifset sees this as his largest historiographic intervention and frequently alludes to the debates at Storm King Mountain as a precursor to environmental law. The author uses compelling evidence to support his claim. Prior to the wave of 1970s environmental legislation, environmentalists pressed the government to take action to protect striped bass populations. Lacking legal basis, Scenic Hudson produced a series of damaging reports that argued for further studies about the proposed plant's effects on the river's spawning grounds and water quality. In response, Congress passed the Hudson River Basin Compact Act in 1969. The bill required the Department of the Interior to form a committee to review the ecological claims of both Consolidated Edison and environmental organizations. Lifset argues that this legislation acted in the same way as an early version of the National Environmental Policy Act, passed in 1972.

The activists ultimately bulwarked Storm King Mountain from Consolidated Edison's power plant through a flurry of environmental claims. The final portion of the text outlines how new federal laws, as well as establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency, provided the legal teeth to officially investigate and deter the construction of the Storm King power plant. Potential violations of the Clean Water Act

as well as the well-known threat to striped bass populations gave Scenic Hudson the upper hand to protect the iconic Hudson landscape. Scenic Hudson's efforts through the 1960s had "been able to delay the plant until the company faced a new welter of environmental laws, regulations, institutions, that finally scuttled the project" in the 1970s (184). The preservation of Storm King Mountain benefited from grass-roots fervor, legal resilience, and a national government increasingly interested in protecting American environments.

Power on the Hudson is a legal history of an environmental movement. The author's analysis is a reflection of the source material—court reports, legal documents, corporate records, and personal interviews of leading environmentalists. As a result, Lifset's environmentalists are determined and pragmatic. This perspective, while diligently researched and clearly written, overlooks the emotionality of many Hudson River Valley residents. When the author offers glimpses of the visceral reactions some individuals held towards Consolidated Edison's proposed plant, readers find a different type of environmental movement. At the group's early meetings, members of the Hudson River Fisherman's Association (HRFA) proposed using floating rafts of dynamite to destroy Consolidated Edison piers. As if pulled from Edward Abbey's *Monkey Wrench Gang*, these vignettes demonstrate the cultural importance area residents placed on Storm King Mountain and the Hudson River Valley landscape. A cultural perspective also may help to explain the final agreement, or Hudson River Peace Treaty, signed in 1980 between Consolidated Edison and several environmental organizations. The mutual agreement preserved Storm King Mountain while permitting Consolidated Edison to avoid strict enforcement of the Clean Water Act at its remaining power plants—an agreement the EPA begrudgingly accepted. For those hoping to protect Storm King Mountain, the resolution marked the end of a long legal battle. Lifset describes this compromise as a legal landmark and demonstrative of successful environmental mediation. The resolution protected the scenic mountain, but what can be said of the overall Hudson River watershed? Did the members of Scenic Hudson have a genuine concern for the ecology of the Hudson River? Or did the environmentalists use the striped bass to provide legal rhetoric to protect their beautiful Storm King Mountain? These are questions left unexplored in a monograph more focused on the legal implications of this movement than the cultural forces at play.

Lifset's work is an important contribution to the history of the modern environmental movement. As a result, *Power on the Hudson* will appeal to a wide range of specialists. Those interested in environmental history, legal history, and New York State history will find value in the text. And while the subject matter may seem too narrow to the casual reader, Lifset effectively weaves legal arguments and environmental issues into an approachable and broad narrative—an impressive accomplishment considering the number of environmental groups, legal briefs, and corporate records the author navigated throughout the project. Additionally, Lifset successfully demonstrates the importance energy production and consumption played in shaping the modern environmental

movement. Ultimately, *Power on the Hudson* will be a book future historians must consider when exploring the many shades of American environmentalism.

Camden Burd, University of Rochester