

Twenty-Five Years of 'Change' and Things Remain The Same

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This paper addresses two concerns within the area of Environmental Justice. The primary concern is environmental gentrification and the secondary concern is the systematic exclusion of black owned environmental consulting firms as 'Prime' in Brownfield projects. The two are interrelated and the existence of the secondary concern is a significant contributor to the existence of the primary concern. In spite of federal legislation that specifies that black owned firms are to be a part of Brownfield projects, Brownfield Authorities across the country ignore that legislation. The end result is the same whenever racism prevails...Billions of Brownfield dollars are allocated into the pockets of white environmental consulting firms and black owned environmental consulting firms are pushed aside.

Disadvantaged communities and neighborhoods across America, have historically been plagued by poverty, joblessness, injustice, and lack of investment. They suffer disproportionately from the impacts of contaminated properties, known as brownfields. It is well documented¹ that people who live in lower income communities and areas with higher percentages of people of color tend to reside in closer proximity to hazardous waste sites, industrial facilities releasing toxic pollutants, and facilities using toxic chemicals in industrial production. These disadvantaged communities also tend to have more blighted areas, more abandoned gas stations and buildings, and more abandoned warehouses and vacant industrial properties. These brownfields threaten public health and the environment, exacerbate neighborhood blight, discourage new investment and revitalization, and accelerate patterns of poverty and decline that continue to plague disadvantaged communities.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Brownfield Program began in the early 1990s under the 104th Congress. In early 2002, the dawn of a new era supposedly was born with the enactment of the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act, commonly referred to as the "Brownfields Law". This law was supposedly designed to provide the EPA with expanded authority and funding to help communities clean up and reuse the hundreds of thousands of brownfields where blighted disadvantaged neighborhoods were infected with unknown health and environmental risks. EPA implemented these new provisions and provided the **benefits** directly to brownfield **stakeholders** across the United States. Unfortunately, in 2002, no one asked, "Who precisely are the **stakeholders** to whom the benefits are provided"? EPA's guidances simply do not resolve the pervasive complex environmental justice concerns in a manner that is mutually acceptable to all 'stakeholders'.

The term 'stakeholder' is typically interpreted as an entity that has a legitimate interest in a project or activity. Entities that may be identified as stakeholders might include: municipalities, counties, state agencies, land/property developers, investors, bankers and financiers, environmental firms, and the disadvantaged individuals who actually reside in the brownfield neighborhood. All of these inclusions have a legitimate interest in the revitalization of the brownfield, and therefore all are included, except, unfortunately for one: the disadvantaged individuals who actually reside in the brownfield neighborhood. Do the disadvantaged individuals have a legitimate interest? Of course, unfortunately, the disadvantaged individuals are the disenfranchised individuals as well.

Perhaps the appropriate term for this environmental injustice is 'brownfield gentrification', defined as the taking of properties in run-down urban neighborhoods by affluent people, thus increasing property values but displacing less affluent residents and owners of small businesses. Two faulty studies on gentrification stand out as horrific: one is a paper

published out of the University of Chicago that attempts to discredit environmental justice by claiming there is no environmental racism and the other is a paper published by staff at Georgia State University and published for the National Center for Environmental Economics(EPA) The University of Chicago paper promotes the notion that there is no environmental racism and the Georgia State University paper overtly claims that environmental gentrification may be a good thing. The horrific character of these two papers is in the fact that so called 'intellectuals' and people with academic credentials attempt to use statistics and mathematical models to add credence to their racist perspectives. This brings to mind an attempt by an epidemiologist, engaged by The World Bank, to attempt to convince the Ministers of Environment and Health in Turkmenistan that a "little fecal matter in Turkmenistan's drinking water, might be a good thing to aid the people of Turkmenistan to develop immunities to bacteria". Needless to say, the Ministers did not concur and that specific trip turned out to be a failure. The two referenced papers here, as in the situation in Turkmenistan, underscore that fact that fecal matter is not a good thing for anyone.

According to Kenneth J Warren , "*Environmental justice is the name commonly given to the concept that minority and low income populations should be treated fairly in environmental decision making*". Warren addresses the wide range of environmental decisions that minorities and low income populations in brownfields are denied to participate in. Warren writes: "*One of the EPA's greatest challenges over the past several years has been to develop procedures and obtain outcomes that satisfy environmental justice concerns. EPA's Title VI regulations prohibit a recipient of federal funds from administering a program that has the intent or effect of subjecting individuals to discrimination because of their race, color, national origin or sex. See 40 C.F.R. § 7.35(b). See also Exec. Order No. 12,898 (including low income populations among the protected classes)*". However, it is evident that these endeavors have achieved little if anything in the realm of environmental justice. Because,

despite the standard set forth in its regulations, EPA has been reluctant to find violations when faced with complaints. The lack of environmental justice is not only the denial of participating in the permitting of a landfill or other environmental/public threat location. The lack of environmental justice is also manifested by the fate of the disadvantaged once the brownfield is transformed into a revitalized area.

“Disadvantaged” Communities have not and do not use brownfield tools and resources as a spark to redevelop blighted areas or create opportunities or give hope for the benefit of their “disadvantaged” residents. Although communities with large segments of disadvantaged residents may use the disadvantaged residents in the brownfield as a tool to leverage resources and assistance to spur revitalization, brownfield redevelopment is not about disadvantaged individuals. Brownfield redevelopment is not disadvantaged-people-development. Disadvantaged individuals only serve initially as a tool in a community’s acquisition of brownfield redevelopment funds.

The term brownfield revitalization/redevelopment is defined by EPA as, *‘the reuse, refurbishment, or expansion of real property which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of hazardous substances’*. There is nothing in that definition that addresses disadvantaged people. Across the U.S, developers grab up abandoned urban mills, factories, landfills, gas stations and quarries and, using government money, replace those eye soars with condominiums, town houses, and single family homes. These areas are in prime locations close to jobs, entertainment, mass transportation, etc and because of these amenities, consumers are willing to pay top dollar to live on land once barely, if not at all, fit for habitation. Disadvantaged residents, who once occupied the brownfield prior to revitalization/redevelopment, are seldom the individuals who occupy it after the

revitalization/redevelopment. After the tool is used successfully, there is little use for it, so it is cast away.

Consider some of the portrayed success that is reported on the EPA's web site:

[1] **Center Wheeling, West Virginia:** The CSX property formerly included residential and commercial uses. Rated as blighted in the 1990s. Some \$70,000 in EPA Brownfield Assessment Pilot funds were used to fund Phase I and II assessment activities. As a result of these assessments, some \$18.5 Million dollars were leveraged for redevelopment activities. A new 116,000 square feet Lowe's home improvement store has been constructed on the property as the first of a three phase construction project that will cost more than \$70 Million Dollars and result in an approximate 1000 jobs. Already the Lowe's store opening is reported to have created 175 jobs. The question to ask here, however, is how many of the existing jobs and potential jobs are and will be filled by the original disadvantaged residents of the brownfield property before it was revitalized?

[2] **Charlotte, North Carolina:** The Camden Square area was Charlotte's first Brownfields Pilot success. The Camden Square area was transformed to now house the Design Center of the Carolinas, which is a complex of three buildings that house architectural firms, graphics production companies, interior design firms, and other design related endeavors. The project leveraged some \$14.5 Million dollars in redevelopment investments and is projected to reach \$49 Million with a total creation of 750 jobs. What was the Camden Square area prior to this revitalization? It is defined as "a mixed use area". Now there is an interesting phrase. That phrase essentially translates into the realization that disadvantage and disenfranchised lived in the 'mixed use area' among not only commercial but most likely light industrial and a variety of toxic generating entities. How many of the 750 jobs may the disadvantaged residents expect in

this 'design related endeavors' center? There is no mention of training funds to train the former existing disadvantaged residents nor would the former disadvantaged residents have any where near the skills levels required for those jobs. If they had, they would not be disadvantaged in the first place.

[3] **Fort Worth, Texas:** Fort Worth's 25-acre Evans and Rosedale neighborhood, described as a once prosperous hub of African American commerce and culture in the 1930s and 1940s fell to a state of disrepair, with many buildings in need of serious structural assistance and businesses in need of a jump start. Plans for this district include restaurants, jazz venues, a central park and plaza, medical facilities, commercial and residential buildings and new anchor businesses. One can only muse what the role of the existing disadvantaged residents will be after this transformation.

[4] **Dallas, Texas:** In the early 1990s, the area along South Lamar in Dallas was deteriorating. Many of the buildings were boarded, the area suffered a high crime rate, and, of course, the residents were disadvantaged and primarily minority. A Sears's store that had closed in 1993 had over a million square feet of floor space and 1500 parking spaces. A developer in Dallas saw the potential to reuse the Sears property. The developer renovated the Sears structure to a 1 million square feet 455 residential loft apartments that feature fluted columns, natural ceilings, sliding panels, oversized bathrooms, exposed brick walls, and original maple floorings. Amenities include a pool and jogging track on the roof, as well as a fitness center, movie theatre, and business center. The loft apartments range from 1,000 to 3,300 square feet and lease for \$800 to \$3500 per month. Just to make sure the occupants enjoy quiet and peaceful living, the developer brought in a 1500 employees police force. How many of the

original disadvantaged brownfield residents who once occupied the neighbor do you think ever got an opportunity to live in that complex?

These few of many similar examples are provided only to point out that the disadvantaged/disenfranchised have little say in their fate with respect to the brownfield in which they once resided. Once the community stakeholders acquire their requested brownfield redevelopment funds, the “disadvantaged” residents now become a burden. A “disadvantaged” community is so labeled as long as a certain percentage of their citizenry are “disadvantaged” individuals. Prior to the brownfield revitalization, there are disadvantaged individuals useful for the municipality/county/brownfield redevelopment authority to qualify for their revitalization funds. Subsequent to the brownfield revitalization, these disadvantaged/disenfranchised individuals must be dealt with and are typically pushed out of the picture.

Just as a side note, the term “disadvantaged” seems to always be defined in terms of ethnicity. The term originally referred to black Americans; racism solidified that. After the Vietnamese war, Asians got included in the term. With the significant increase of Hispanics and Latinos, the term has been redefined to ‘people of color’. Somewhere along the line, the designation of ‘poor whites’ got included and the definition evolved again to ‘people of color and poor whites’. It seems the definition ‘*poor people of color and poor whites*’ or simply ‘*poor people*’ would logically suffice.

Nevertheless, it is the lack of education, lack of financial resources, and lack of sound mental capacity that defines an individual as disadvantaged and marked by poverty, injustice and without investment. Lack of education and resources, along with political intervention,

result in disadvantaged people being disenfranchised and being located in or near contaminated areas in the first place. These same factors are responsible for the majority of disadvantaged people being pushed out of an area, once revitalization/redevelopment is accomplished.

Eliminating the disadvantaged/disenfranchised is a common activity even outside the realm of brownfields. Consider, for example, the Katrina flood damage in Louisiana in 2005. Monies for the reconstruction of property and structures are being provided to rebuild the devastation. The devastation was portrayed with many views of structures under water on national television, but more, it was the sad and tragic faces of disadvantaged men, women, and children, the elderly, and of dead bodies of African Americans laying unattended on sidewalks for days...the horrendous fate put upon the 'refugees', as the media referred to them...people seeking shelter in a foreign country. A great deal of reaction was vocalized on the use of the term 'refugees'...implying foreigners in a foreign land. What happened to those victims of the flood? They were evacuated... bussed out.. flown out...dispersed to far away locations. Will these victims/evacuees be contacted and offered an opportunity to return to start building? Are they even wanted back? Current discussions appear to be along the lines of rebuilding a different New Orleans...one without the disadvantaged/disenfranchised/refugee. In October 2005, the Washington Post reported that whites from the more affluent areas that were flooded were in the process of returning in far greater numbers than people returning to the predominately black ghettos. The impact of this trend could result in a permanent shift of the political landscape which could result in further disempowerment of low income and non-white residents. To the disadvantaged/disenfranchised/'refugee'...the United States obviously is a foreign land, or so it appears.

Although there is no debate that contaminated properties sustain the patterns of poverty that plague disadvantaged people, brownfield redevelopment is not a rescue program for disadvantaged individuals as purported. Brownfield redevelopment is about 'what-makes-financial-sense'.

According to the U.S. conference of Mayors, the Northeast Midwest Institute and the Ferguson Group, EPA investments since 1995 have leveraged some \$8.2 Billion dollars in cleanup and redevelopment monies. This is a 10:1 return on public investment. As a result of this investment, more than 8,000 properties have been environmentally assessed. Many of these properties have been developed in to showcase commercial, retail, and upscale living facilities that generate attractive profits for developers, property managers, bankers, financiers, attorneys, investors, and other so called stakeholders, and of course excluding the disadvantaged resident who once occupied the brownfield prior to revitalization.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors, the Northeast Midwest Institute and the Ferguson Group, further report that EPA has invested approximately \$800 Million to \$1 Billion Dollars in brownfield site assessment and cleanup since 1995. What entity/entities is/are the recipient of these monies?. Assuming that the majority of these funds are for either Phase I and II Environmental Assessments and Remediations, it perhaps follows that a fairly large proportion of these monies go to environmental companies. How many of the environmental companies that perform the environmental assessments are African American owned? Or to be a bit broader, how many are minority owned? Research into this area has revealed very little information. Google searches for minority and specifically, African American environmental firms and consultants result in a multitude of links but unfortunately, upon accessing the links, the referenced site has little to do with African American environmental firms. Inquiry to

exemplary successful brownfield revitalized municipalities have resulted in very odd responses. When asked the number of African American prime contracted environmental companies that they have retained for their EPA funded brownfield revitalization projects, responses included "...we do not retain that kind of information on our contracted vendors..." to "...we are trying to identify the person within our organization who may be able to respond to your question..." ..."black owned environmental firms can not afford the insurance.." etc. It is very strange that the recipients of Brownfield funds have "no records" of minority participation, when in fact every entity that receives funds from Federal programs must complete EPA Form 5700-52A detailing MBE/WBE utilization based on Executive Orders 11625, 12238, 12432, P.L., 102-389 and EPA Regulations Part 30 and 31. It is similarly odd that a firm that is awarded a \$250,000 dollar contract would have no money to purchase the required insurance.

Within the environmental injustice of brownfield gentrification is another environmental injustice, namely the exclusion of African American environmental companies from access to the \$800 Million to \$1 Billion Dollars in brownfield site assessment funds. Although unable to find publishable nationwide data on the extent of utilization of African American environmental firms as primes in EPA funded projects, it is known, based on first hand experience, that no recipient of EPA Brownfield monies (in minimum quantities of \$250,000 per project) within the State of Michigan, including the City of Detroit, has used an African American environmental firm as a prime contractor for brownfield environmental work. The exclusion of African American environmental companies as prime contractors for brownfield revitalization projects is directly connected to the continued disenfranchised disadvantaged brownfield resident. This exclusion is a facilitator of brownfield gentrification.

Incidentally, it is noted that the EPA promulgated regulations 40 CFR Part 30 and 31. with the intent to include African American environmental consulting and engineering firms (redefined as 'Disadvantaged' Business Enterprises (DBEs) at least to a level of 8%. Public Law 102-389, a 1993 appropriations act provides: The Administrator of the EPA shall, to the fullest extent possible, ensure that at least 8% of Federal funding for prime and subcontracts awarded in support of authorized programs, including grants, loans and contracts for wastewater treatment and leaking underground storage tanks grants, be made available to business concerns or other organizations owned or controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. This was targeted for failure from inception for primarily two reasons: First, African Americans who identify themselves as 'disadvantaged' relinquish their power to define their destiny. Essentially they too fall into the same category as the disenfranchised brownfield residents. But secondly and a more substantial contributor to failure was the fact that, along with the promulgation of the above regulation, EPA followed up with the statement that "for purposes of this section, economically and socially disadvantaged individuals shall be deemed to include women". As may be anticipated, white women rose to the occasion of this opportunity, to the delight of white male owned environmental companies, and thus, African American environmental firms were, for the most part, systematically excluded.

The need for African American environmental consulting firms in brownfield redevelopment is underscored when one considers a major section in brownfield redevelopment that the environmental consultant is expected to perform, and that is **Community Outreach**. This is where the voice of the disadvantaged resident is supposed to be spoken and heard. This is where the disadvantaged resident can become part of the revitalization and a part of having input in his or her future. This is where the disadvantaged

resident could step to the table as a stakeholder. It is evident that predominantly white environmental firms, which have no ties or responsibility to the non-white community that they are presumably serving, take millions of dollars and essentially skip over this critical aspect of brownfield revitalization.

In those limited instances where African American environmental firms have penetrated the barrier and landed brownfield revitalization projects as the prime contractor, the disadvantaged brownfield residents do indeed become genuine stakeholders. A good example is demonstrated in the activities of Remediation Services, Inc (RSI) based out of San Francisco, CA. RSI is an African American owned environmental firm that is a community based enterprise. They hire and train local community residents to perform environmental field services. They provide a forum in which the disadvantaged resident has an opportunity to speak and be heard. They give the disadvantaged resident validity.

Disadvantaged brownfield residents deserve to be stakeholders and to be given an opportunity to change their existence in accordance with the changes that are taking place around them, as well as to be a viable part of those changes. They may have knowledge on the local areas that the so called experts can use. They may also have valuable perspectives about cleanup strategies and priorities.

Community participation and stakeholder involvement are supposed to play an essential role in successful brownfield redevelopment. Unfortunately, the reality is, community participation, wherein the disadvantaged are involved, is viewed as adversarial, obstructive, and a process that slows/stalls the project.

Community Outreach, if implemented as it was intended, could provide counseling, education, job training, job opportunities, etc. Unfortunately, the way it is usually implemented diminishes its usefulness to little more than a red herring to divert attention from the reality that there is little if any concern for the disadvantaged individuals who give definition to a community seeking brownfield funds. While it is true that disadvantaged communities face unique and difficult barriers as they seek to clean up and reuse their brownfields, the disadvantaged individuals who assisted that community to be labeled as “disadvantaged” are pushed out, bussed out, or otherwise routed on to contribute to some other community seeking qualification for the label of ‘disadvantaged’ to obtain brownfield monies.

While acknowledging that up until recently the majority of brownfield projects were devoted to commercial and industrial site revitalization with heavy monetary returns, Bartch^{ref #} believes that more and more communities and private developers are becoming interested in exploring ways in which affordable housing projects can be successfully undertaken at brownfield sites. After the expenditure of approximately \$1 Billion Dollars, this half hearted “...becoming interested in...” is far too little and woefully overdue. But worse, “...becoming interested in...” is an illusion of hope.

For the disadvantaged brownfield neighborhood residents that have already been displaced, dispersed and shoved off to who-knows-where, this “...becoming interested in...” is ludicrous and totally meaningless. This “...becoming interested in...” is the same deceit that is portrayed from inception when municipalities, counties, townships, etc initialize pursuit of EPA funding of their brownfield revitalization projects. As part of the required EPA application, they regurgitate the expected answers such as, “...there is a large population of disadvantaged residents in the area targeted for brownfield remediation...”; “...most of these unfortunate

individuals are African Americans and back in the 1930s and 1940s this was an area of successful black commerce...”; “...the number of jobs created will be...”; “...our brownfield redevelopment program will provide acceptable housing for residents...”; and ad infinitum to the point of disgust. The pretense of giving hope is worse than an individual who is without hope. The pretense of giving hope is deceit.

Fortunately, albeit with significantly fewer dollars provided by EPA Brownfield funds, there are some real, although limited, success stories wherein local residents...the disadvantaged residents of the brownfield neighborhood, are being addressed.

Since 1998, Jobs for Youth-Boston has concentrated its efforts in the cities of Lynn, Somerville, Chelsea, and Boston. Massachusetts to help local residents develop technical skills needed to clean up blighted and contaminated properties and move themselves into productive use. Although Boston is known as the economic hub of New England, it does have an industrial history and the associated economic and social blights, e.g., poverty, abandoned properties, and pollution. It is noted that the lion's share of funding for Jobs for Youth-Boston comes from private sources. Thirty-two percent of the population in Lynn, Somerville, and Chelsea Massachusetts (an area of some 300 brownfields), lives in poverty and 75% are minority; Jobs for Youth-Boston targeted these disadvantaged brownfield residents for training programs. The training programs include courses on environmental assessment of properties, cleanup methods, environmental mapping, and the use of innovative technologies. Trainees receive additional support such as classes in remedial math and English, interview preparation, workplace skills, and resume writing. Job trainees are soon assimilated into the job market to perform environmental laboratory analysis, conduct field work and treat contaminated properties. Jobs for Youth-Boston is making a real difference in the quality of

life for graduates and in the community. Perhaps what is needed is a Jobs For Youth-USA. This is a success story of what can be done to help the disadvantaged brownfield resident and perhaps a model that could be reproduced across the United States and more heavily funded by Federal assistance.

There are other success stories that depict what can be done when there is sincerity and commitment in purpose. The disadvantaged residents of the Liberty Street Corridor in Winston Salem, North Carolina are provided technical skills to prepare them for increased employment opportunities. The curriculum is designed by local environmental practitioners and the academic community. The 194-hour course provides technical and safety training that prepares the former brownfield neighborhood residents for employment in the waste management, private or public infrastructure, construction, demolition, and environmental consulting and contracting industries. Sixty percent of their graduates are placed into employment positions in the environmental sector within two months of graduation, they claim. Again another success story, which is heartening.

Residents of the Crow Indian Reservation in southeastern Montana were given the opportunity to receive environmental training that is anticipated to both lead to a better future for themselves and for their surroundings as well. Montana Tech at the University of Montana has trained more than 100 participants for future employment in the environmental field, increased communication among tribal entities, and heightened awareness of environmental issues on the Crow Reservation. The program has brought non-traditional students, e.g., tribal elders, back into the classroom, provided them with opportunities to enhance skill sets, furthered their education, and provided input to tribal decision makers. And still another success story.

One might say, with these kinds of success stories, what is the complaint? The complaint is that although these situations exist, wherein disadvantaged residents are given an advantage, the dollars committed to these types of programs are meager relative to the extensive funds that are invested in property improvement with no consideration as to the life of the disadvantaged resident. Far more along these lines is needed to be done and yet it is very difficult to implement due to an overwhelming concept that prevails throughout our society.

So what is the current state of environmental justice? Twenty five years of change and things remain the same. We have success stories of areas that once were toxic waste dumps and now are transformed into the 'high rent district'. Multitudes of dollars have been and still are poured into the economy in search of change, and we are actually able to see a visible physical change in property quality, building structures, landscape, etc and also in demographics. Yes, things change for some, but remain the same for others, and specifically remain the same for the disadvantaged brownfields residents. Disadvantaged brownfield residents are not the ones living in the now transformed residential areas with comfortable amenities of pools and jogging tracks. The jobs created are not jobs to provide employment for the disadvantaged.

There may be training programs that appear to be starting to expand, but for the most part the training of the disadvantaged is a very meager attempt that does not even come close to the extensive training that should be implemented. What does community participation really mean? We have already shown that the disadvantaged are not included in the group referred

to as stakeholders. Community participation in environmental decision making, for the most part, does not include the participation by or inclusion of the disadvantaged.

What about the distribution of community benefits? The EPA has invested millions of dollars in restoring, refurbishing, excavating contaminated soils, treating ground water, and implementing in situ innovative remediation technologies and methodologies to clean up some thousands of properties that represent thousands and thousands of acres of property in the United States. With all of this, the 'benefits' are still distributed in the same fashion, with the disadvantaged just out of reach. As is similar to being in a deceitful card game when one is continually dealt the same losing hand. One may wonder, "wow, is this magic?... is this fate? No, it is merely slight of hand. This same old slight of hand keeps disadvantaged people at an economically depressed level. The deceit to purport that the disadvantaged will be elevated in the pursuit to acquire funds for brownfield revitalization is disgusting.

As regards public health benefits, where are they? The disadvantaged certainly are not privy to them. Toxic facility locating and environmental justice? There are still toxic waste areas where the disadvantage are located. The disadvantaged live there partly because toxic generating facilities identify areas of least resistance to locate within. The disadvantaged are also disenfranchised...they have little capability to object to a level to have impact. So where do they go when they are uprooted from their brownfield neighborhood? They seek out and move to another brownfield neighborhood.

The lack of environmental justice is the result of racism. Racism is so ingrained in our society, it is similar to staphylococcus aureus (staph) which prevails without control, in all of our health facilities through out this country. Irrespective of scientific and medical

technological advances, staph continues to increase at logarithmic rates. Similarly, racism, in spite of our extensive education, knowledge and so called social advances, also increases at logarithmic rates. Why the analogy of racism to staph? Simply because racism is an infectious social disease that lurks within our society and is as deadly and as evasive as staph.

In 2007 we believe our society to be smarter and far more intelligent than it has ever been; yet the racism exists and persists. Racism isn't something that is logical. It is totally illogical and fed by ignorance. Yet it prevails. In order to effectively discard a problem, we must first acknowledge the cause. To treat the symptoms is not enough. In order to resolve the problem of environmental injustice, we must address the cause, and the cause is racism... point of fact. And how is that resolved? We have no idea. However, until racism is resolved, the implementation of environmental justice in the United States will not be actualized.

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