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## Review of: Robert M. Hardaway, *Population, Law, and the Environment* (Praeger 1994)

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## Book Reviews

Robert M. Hardaway, *Population, Law, and the Environment* (Praeger 1994). About the author, acknowledgements, index, notes, preface, selected bibliography. LC-93-44501; ISBN 0-275-94570-7 [188 pp. \$55.00 Cloth. 88 Post Road West, Westport CT 06881.]

Hardaway initially theorizes that overpopulation will eventually cause global disasters. Acknowledging that the idea is not new, he refers to Malthus' 1798 predictions. He further argues that escape is only temporary and the current picture is not altogether rosy.<sup>1</sup>

Hardaway's style draws the reader in, as does his thought-provoking statistics:<sup>2</sup>

Every one-third of a second, at about the speed a machine gun fires its bullets, the planet earth makes room to accommodate one additional human being. To provide that one human being with minimum standards of human dignity, he must be provided annually with fuel and energy resources... 2000 m<sup>3</sup> of fresh water... [and] 207 GJ of energy... from nonrenewable sources.... His waste products include 355,000 metric tons of phosphorus... 270,000 metric tons of methane, 30,000 of sulfur, and 80,000 of carbon monoxide....

He explains that, in the past, societies coped with overpopulation through, e.g., emigration and technology. Present society, however, has turned to regulation to relieve environmental pressures. In that vein, Hardaway discusses what former EPA Administrator, Lee Thomas called "the circle game" — an impression given to voters that the environment is being improved, when regulation merely transfers pollution from one medium to another.<sup>3</sup> He argues that, while reduction in an air contaminant might be hailed as an environmental victory, its simultaneous appearance in, e.g., soil is rarely greeted as defeat or even acknowledged.

Hardaway also argues that regulatory improvements are often nullified by population increases, even before they go into effect. For

<sup>1</sup> At 2.

<sup>2</sup> At 17.

<sup>3</sup> At 43.

instance, before states could implement car emission legislation, the number of cars on the road increased so much that the legislation's benefits were reduced to almost nothing.

Hardaway also discusses other factors that he believes to be important with regard to population growth such as family planning, abortion, immigration and economic growth. Yet, he offers possible solutions, leaving the reader with some basis for optimism.

All-in-all, *Population, Law, and the Environment* suggests that the key to controlling our future is awareness. In that vein at its close,<sup>4</sup> Hardaway refers to a 1992 slogan indicating what some Democrats thought the Presidential campaign was mostly about — “It’s the Economy, Stupid.” He then suggests that a sign should be prominently posted in the headquarters of environmental groups, saying, “It’s the Population, Stupid.”

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<sup>4</sup> At 167.

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