From Precaution to Profit: Contemporary Challenges to Environmental Protection in the Montreal Protocol. By Brian J. Gareau. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2013. Pp. xix+362. $55.00.

Oriol Mirosa
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

For over two decades, scholars and policy makers have regarded the Montreal Protocol—which since its adoption by the international community in the 1980s has fought the depletion of the ozone layer—as the poster-child story for successful global environmental governance. Not so fast, says Brian Gareau. In his fascinating new book, *From Precaution to Profit*, Gareau argues that, despite its major accomplishments, not all is well with the protocol. Contrary to popular belief, the thinning of the ozone layer remains a major environmental concern, and the early success of the protocol in phasing out chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) notwithstanding, other ozone-depleting substances are proving much harder to tackle. Specifically, Gareau focuses his analysis on methyl bromide (MeBr), a chemical intensively used in the production of strawberries in California that the United States has been reluctant to phase out.

In trying to make sense of the MeBr case, Gareau casts his net wide. He moves from general trends in environmental governance to specific ozone-depleting chemicals, from high-level meetings at the global level to the strawberry fields of California, from the official positions of government delegations to the actions of nongovernmental organizations, and from material production processes to shifts in discourse and the generation of knowledge. Such a broad research scope requires brevity in the exploration of each topic, which sometimes can seem underexplored even for a 280-page book (not counting notes, bibliography, and index). But Gareau successfully makes the case that the consideration of all these elements is necessary in order to understand the problems of the Montreal Protocol in dealing with MeBr. It is precisely in bringing together these different aspects of global governance, which are usually addressed separately in the literature, into a coherent whole that the book's main contribution rests.

The volume begins with an introduction (chap. 1) to the issue of the depletion of the ozone layer and MeBr's role in it and then proceeds to its subsequent analysis in two parts. The first one, consisting of two chapters, focuses on the general shift in environmental governance from state-centered action guided by the precautionary principle, which was essential for the initial success of the Montreal Protocol, to "neoliberal" environmentalism, which emphasizes market-based solutions and prioritizes the needs of individual actors (chap. 2). The author argues that the problems emerging in the MeBr controversy were made possible by this shift, which allowed the particular commercial interests of California growers to enter the negotiations and to take priority over general public concerns. The second chapter in this part (chap. 3) skillfully compares the earlier and rela-

tively smooth process of phasing out CFCs with the later, much more contested one involving MeBr.

The second part of the book, which comprises four chapters, delves into the case of the MeBr phaseout and deploys a number of theoretical approaches to analyze its different components. Chapter 4 begins with a critique of one of the few sociological accounts of the Montreal Protocol (Penelope Canan and Nancy Reichman's *Ozone Connections: Expert Networks in Global Environmental Governance* [Greenleaf, 2002])—and its use of the concept of social capital to explain the protocol's initial successes. Gareau argues that the social capital approach, with its optimistic view of horizontal networks, misses the power differentials among the actors who participate in global environmental governance. Through the consideration of this vertical dimension and a Bourdieusian bend on social capital, Gareau explains the dynamics of the MeBr phaseout, which prioritize the economic interests of a private actor in a powerful country (the California strawberry industry) over those of the general public and poor countries. These dynamics are illustrated through an ethnographic account of the discussions that took place in a number of meetings of several protocol bodies, and they constitute some of the most compelling and intriguing empirical material in the book. The author does an excellent job of showing how policy making within the technical bodies of the Montreal Protocol takes place, yet I missed a more thorough description of the composition of committees and how their members are chosen. Further detail would have provided some useful context to better understand the positions adopted at (and absent from) the meetings. In chapter 5, Gareau explores the tensions between different countries in the MeBr negotiations. The rivalry between the United States and the European Union is at the core of this chapter, but the difficulties experienced by less developed states are also carefully considered. Even if the intricacies of the power game between nations are interesting, this chapter offers few novel insights. It mainly reinforces the conclusions of previous work that has identified the disproportionate influence of powerful states in global governance as well as the subordinated position of less developed nations.

Chapter 6 centers on a topic that recurs throughout the book—the coproduction of science and politics. Here the author uses interviews with members of the protocol's MeBr technical committees to argue that the construction of scientific knowledge and the political process go hand in hand. Gareau shows that the basic assumptions and lenses through which scientific knowledge is constructed depend on the country of origin of scientists and experts. The strong and lucid chapter 7 uses a Foucauldian framework based on the concept of governmentality to explore the role of nongovernmental organizations in the MeBr process. The author argues that NGOs that attempt to further the principles on which the Montreal Protocol was originally based, such as precaution and the promotion of public goals, become marginalized and ineffective. In contrast, those who adopt a neoliberal approach and rhetoric manage to remain relevant, which leads to the problematic neoliberalization of civil society interventions.

Finally, the concluding chapter summarizes the findings of the book and uses them to reassess the often-posed question of what lessons the Montreal Protocol offers for fighting climate change.

In sum, *From Precaution to Profit* is an outstanding book that makes an extremely valuable contribution to our understanding of global environmental governance. Gareau's work should be widely read both by environmental sociologists and those interested in global and transnational processes.

Democracy in the Making: How Activist Groups Form. By Kathleen M. Blee. New York: Oxford University Press. Pp. x+211. $29.95.

Ziad Munson
Lehigh University

Scholars have painted the founding moments of activist groups in only broad strokes. This portrayal is mainly due to a lack of empirical data on organizational origins; we tend to turn our attention to social movement activity only after it has attained some modicum of prominence or success. Kathleen M. Blee's *Democracy in the Making* sets out to fill in the picture of social movement origins with an ambitious and original study of new social movement organizations: those just trying to get off the ground with initial meetings and beginning conversations about ideology, strategy, and recruitment. The result is a volume brimming with interesting findings and theoretical contributions that will be of use to a wide range of both scholars and activists.

The study is based on direct observations of several hundred events, most of them meetings, of 69 emerging groups in the Pittsburgh area between 2003 and 2007. The data is presented and analyzed in three core chapters that each take up a common question addressed by the groups themselves: What's the problem? Who belongs? and How should we treat each other? The empirical findings in these core chapters are perhaps the greatest contribution of the book. Blee finds that groups spend much time and energy trying to expand their numbers, but new recruits are seldom made to feel welcome or valued at meetings. New groups also do little group learning and attribute setbacks and mistakes to poor judgment rather than a lack of information or knowledge. And groups tend to quickly shut down discussion of their own internal dynamics and decision-making processes—even in groups explicitly dedicated to open and democratic procedures. The findings are sobering, and provide new insight into why so few new social movement organizations survive for very long.

At the center of Blee's theoretical approach is the notion of path dependency. The larger argument of the book is that small differences in who attends initial meetings of a group, what is said (and what is not said), and what actions are taken have a large effect on the trajectory of the group, often in ways that are quickly forgotten by even those centrally involved.