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"The Songlines of Risk"

Jasanoff, Sheila

Jasanoff, Sheila. "The Songlines of Risk." *Environmental Values* 8, no. 2 (1999): 135–52. doi:10.3197/096327199129341761 .

Two decades of social and political analysis have helped to enrich the concept of risk that underlies the bulk of modern environmental regulation. Risk is no longer seen merely as the probability of harm arising from more or less determinable physical, biological or social causes. Instead, it seems more appropriate to view risk as the embodiment of deeply held cultural values and beliefs the songlines of the paper's title concerning such issues as agency, causation, and uncertainty. These values are incorporated into the formal methodologies, such as quantitative risk assessment, by which industrial societies assess risk. The meaning of risk accordingly varies from one cultural context to another, posing difficult problems for global environmental governance. The paper reflects on the role of science in promoting convergent perceptions of risk across disparate political cultures.
— Text from The White Horse Press website

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