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GLAWCAL #341
COMMENT

**WHY DISTINGUISH BETWEEN
THE “HUMAN” AND “NATURAL”
WORLDS**

Based on

**Jessica C. Lawrence’s “Managing the
Environment: Neoliberal Governmen-
tality in the Anthropocene”**



gLAWcal
Global Law Initiatives for Sustainable Development



Routledge
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A gLAWcal comment Jessica C. Lawrence's "Managing the Environment: Neoliberal Governmentality in the Anthropocene" in Pasi Heikkinen (Ed.) **Sustainability and Peaceful Coexistence for the Anthropocene.**

There is an often thought distinction between what is manmade and what is natural. Certainly there are objects that are obviously one or the other. Yet there are other examples wherein, artifacts, or systems are not so easily classified. The often contentious opinion that climate change is not "human-caused" instead rests on the idea that the changes in global climate that have been experienced during the industrial change are instead caused by "natural forces". Why make this distinction? In this example, the detractors of anthropogenic climate change believe that "there is nothing humans can do to change natural forces" and therefore are off the hook, so to speak, about doing anything to mitigate the effects of climate change. Another arena where the distinction between manmade and natural is seen the marketing of foodstuffs. This can be more obvious when you make a contrast between cookies that are made in a bakery, and an apple that was picked off the tree in an orchard. The assumption oftentimes is that something that is natural is inherently "better" than something that is manmade. A fur-

ther example of this is the fervor over Genetically Modified Organism; GMO foods. GMOs have provided vast sums of people with sustainable food sources in places that would be unable to produce food without the use of the GMO technological innovations. In contrast to GMOs, certified organic products are often cited as "natural", and "more healthy" than similar GMO products, even if the nutritional value of the food is equal. From a public health perspective, those who cannot necessarily access or afford organic produces may instead choose processed foods instead of getting GMO produce are being failed by systems that further the idea that GMO foods are unsafe, unhealthy, and not fit for consumption.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



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