

Acknowledgments

I first started reading Julian Simon's work in the 1980s and had the good fortune of meeting him at a conference sponsored by PERC, the Property and Environment Research Center, in the late 1980s. One might infer from his writings that he was a heartless economist interested only in debunking environmental myths and measuring economic scarcity. But nothing could be farther from reality. Julian Simon was a kind, gentle man who cared deeply about humanity and the individuals who comprise it. We all owe a debt of thanks to him for his unabiding faith in human beings as "the ultimate resource."

We also owe a debt of gratitude to Bjørn Lomborg for resurrecting the Simon tradition even if his original intent was to show how Simon was wrong. Unlike so many scholars, Lomborg is a true scientist, willing to test his hypotheses against the data and reject them if they prove to be false. Like Simon, Lomborg cares about humanity and the environment in which it lives. Also like Simon, Lomborg's optimism is contagious.

After Simon passed away, my colleagues and I at PERC were concerned that the tradition of his scholarship might not be maintained.

To encourage this scholarship, we approached the D & D Foundation for support of Julian Simon fellowships at PERC. Through support from the D & D Foundation, PERC has enjoyed hosting Julian Simon Fellows since 2000. The scholarship of five of those fellows—B. Delworth Gardner, Indur M. Goklany, Robert E. McCormick, Seth W. Norton, and Bruce Yandle—is featured in this volume. Without the D & D Foundation’s investment in this scholarship, these ideas would not have been nurtured.

The Hoover Institution, where I am privileged to be a senior fellow, plays an important role in fostering these ideas. The institution produces “ideas defining a free society,” and this volume is offered in that tradition. John Raisian, director, fosters an environment for scholars to conduct research and publish their findings, and without his support I could not have pursued this project. Marty and Illie Anderson have provided financial support for my position as the Marty and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow. As readers of this volume will note, property rights and the rule of law are indispensable to environmental quality. The Hoover Institution’s property rights initiative, support by Peter and Kirsten Bedford, has raised our awareness of this link.

I personally owe a debt of gratitude to the authors of this volume, who have put up with my tardiness in bringing the publication to print, to my assistant at PERC, Michelle Johnson, who has made me more efficient than I would otherwise be. These are the really important members of the team that made this volume possible.