



## Climate Change from the Streets

How Conflict and  
Collaboration Strengthen  
the Environmental  
Justice Movement

**MICHAEL MÉNDEZ**

# Broadening Worldviews on *Climate Change*



Co-Benefits



Social Equity



Health Benefits

Human Health and Community Well-being

# Embodied and Lived Experience



Photo Source: CARB (2014)



Photo Source: Pacoima Beautiful (2016)

Sometimes it is the people no one imagines anything of,  
who do the things that no one can imagine.

— Alan Turing (attributed)

# California's Global Climate Leadership





## *Policy Victories for Climate Justice*

- **AB 32 (Núñez, 2006)** – required the Environmental Justice Advisory Committee, outreach in EJ communities, and that regulations not disproportionately impact EJ communities.
- **SB 535 (De León, 2012)/AB 1550 (Gomez, 2016)** – targeted investments to disadvantaged communities
- **AB 197 (E. Garcia, 2016)** – required ARB to consider the social cost of carbon and to prioritize direct emissions reductions

# EJ Activists and Climate Change Policy

- The primary mitigation mechanism being used to fight climate change, carbon trading, does not mandate reductions at any specific facility or location;
- Leaves equity to chance and does not guarantee reductions in communities with the most pollution.

# EJ Activists and Climate Change Policy (cont.)

- EJ should be part of climate change policy;
- EJ should not be left to chance or addressed later;
- The market should not make equity decisions, they should be planned and intentional (*Trickle-down Environmental Policy*).

# Broader Policy Implications



## ***CARBON REDUCTIONISM***



## ***CLIMATE CHANGE from the STREETS***



### **GHG Reduction Potential**

- Measured in tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent
- Scientific framing: detached expertise
- Cost-effectiveness
- Market-based solutions
- Geographically neutral
- Emphasis on mitigation



### **Co-Benefits Potential**

- Co-pollutants + public health + GHGs
- Contextual framing: local expertise
- Cost-effectiveness: Social equity
- Community-based solutions
- Multi-scalar
- Adaptation + mitigation



# Climate Change from the Streets

