

***Security and the Environment: Securitisation Theory and US Environmental Security Policy* by Rita Floyd. Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. 230. \$99 (Hardback). ISBN: 9780521197564**

**Reviewer: Oluwaseun Bamidele<sup>1</sup>**

[Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: [journal@transformativestudies.org](mailto:journal@transformativestudies.org) Website: <http://www.transformativestudies.org> ©2013 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]

The aim of the book *Security and the Environment: Securitisation Theory and US Environmental Security Policy* is to devise a stronger and even more compelling securitization theory. This book proposes a revision of the Copenhagen School's influential securitisation theory that both allows insights into the intentions of securitising actors and enables the moral evaluation of securitization and desecuritisation in the environmental sector of security. Securitisation theory holds that in international relations, an issue becomes a matter of emergency politics/a security issue not because something constitutes an objective threat to the state or to some other entity, but rather because a powerful securitising actor argues that something constitutes an existential threat to some object that needs to be dealt with immediately if the object is to survive.

The idea that security is a self-referential practice is not only the essence of securitisation theory; it is also the secret of the theory's popularity and its explanatory potency. More readily than rival security theories, it allows the security analyst to account for the essentially contested nature of security where one and the same concept may mean entirely different, and even opposing, things. Yet although this is a clear, strong point on the part of securitisation theory, the Copenhagen School's preoccupation with it two major shortcomings. According to Floyd, a Fellow at the Institute for Environmental Security and British Academy Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Warwick, UK, the securitisation analyst studies who can securitise on what issues, under what conditions, and with what effects, whilst questions beyond the

---

<sup>1</sup> **Oluwaseun Bamidele**, University of Ibadan (Nigeria). Address correspondence to: Oluwaseun Bamidele; e-mail: [oluwaseun.bamidele@gmail.com](mailto:oluwaseun.bamidele@gmail.com).