

Environmental Viewpoints

Bridget Bero

Senior Environmental Engineer, Travis Energy & Environment Inc. Hayden Lake, Idaho 83835 USA TEL: 208-772-9149.

Marowski, Daniel G., ed. *Environmental Viewpoints. Volume 1*. Detroit, MI.: Gale Research Inc., 1992. 544 pp. US\$49.95 paper ISBN: 0-8103-8844-8. Recycled, acid-free paper.

You can choose your soapbox from this thorough compilation of today's hottest environmental issues. Volume 1 of an annually published series, *Environmental Viewpoints* covers virtually every conceivable environmental topic in its twenty chapters, from acid rain and alternative fuels to wetland preservation and the world water supply. Each chapter is presented as several excerpted essays that give equal time to opinions from both sides of the fence. The essays require no special technical background. The intended audience is the general reader as well as junior high and high school students looking for topics and information for research projects or essays as a part of an earth science or environmental science course. The text would also provide an excellent reference book for similar college-level courses.

As part of Gale's Environmental Library, this offering has succeeded in preparing a comprehensive one volume environmental primer that should have wide audience appeal. This slightly-larger-than-average text has a detailed index and a large body of suggested outside reading at the end of each chapter. Volume 2 of the series will be available in the nearest future; volumes will be updated -- incorporating new developments in each area as well as the addition of new topics. The annual format is probably the only way the editors can keep their readers current in this ever- changing field. Volume 1 is already dated in its several references to the Bush administration.

It is somewhat surprising that the chapters are arranged alphabetically rather than by larger subject-oriented sections; this may be because the editors sought to avoid the criticism of prioritizing some very volatile topics. Additionally, there are very few instances of repetition within the essays despite the occasional overlapping of issues. While the issues covered and the manner in which they are presented are verbally very graphic, an occasional photograph, statistic/data table or map would have provided additional impact.

To its credit, Gale Research is committed to environmental protection as evidenced by its adoption of the Valdez Principles as a basis for its corporate management practices.

Overall, Volume 1 of the series is a well organized, useful text that leaves no stone unturned concerning today's environmental issues. The breadth of essays will provide valuable environmental insight to all readers and will leave even the most knowledgeable environmentalist equipped with new information.