

Review: Eco-Warriors: Understanding the Radical Environmental Movement (Updated Edition)
By Rik Scarce

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Rik Scarce. *Eco-Warriors: Understanding the Radical Environmental Movement* (updated edition). Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2006. xvii, 313 pp. ISBN: 1-59874-028-8 (paper); US\$26.95. Printed on acid free paper, minimum 30% recycled.

How can a relatively small number of individuals, who have caused millions of dollars in damage and are considered to be domestic terrorists by the FBI, present their case? David Bower, in his foreword to the book, provides a starting point by stating, "Their cause isn't noble, it's essential" (p. xii). Scarce, on the faculty at Skidmore College in the Department of Sociology, draws on the radical environmental movement's own sources and outlooks and intersperses these with numerous comments by the activists themselves. He hopes readers will better understand eco-warrior thinking and actions, even those involving property destruction and civil disobedience. Scarce asks, "...can any acts of destruction match, much less exceed, corporations' and governments' ability to wreak havoc?" (p. 275).

With the exception of a final new chapter, this edition, a fifteen-year update to the first edition (1990), remains unchanged. Scarce did not revise the original text because he believes that the movement's current concerns and challenges are similar to those of fifteen years ago. The coverage is comprehensive, though the discussion in the final chapter on the uses and impact of information technology, a major tool for radical movements, could have been explored more thoroughly.

Eco-Warriors is international in scope, though primarily focused on movements in the U.S. and Britain. Covered are a wide variety of activities by organizations, for example, EarthFirst!, the Sea Sheperds, and personalities, such as Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney. Scarce discusses movements, such as deep ecology, eco-feminism, animal rights/liberation, vegans and their relation to radical environmentalism, and includes a chapter on the literature, art, music and theater of radical environmentalism. The final chapter covers new movements since 1995, for example, Seattle's 1999 WTO protests, new organizations, particularly the Animal Liberation Front and Earth Liberation Front, and continuing problems in the movement, especially gender and race issues. A separate two-page section lists websites

useful for further understanding and getting involved.

Eco-warriors are defined throughout the book, including a "Who are the Radical Environmentalists?" section (pp. 4-7). In summary, they believe that humans are not the measure of all things. They see society as creating ecocide and themselves as eco-rescuers. Problems are confronted through direct action, and media is their strongest weapon. Large, member-based environmental organizations are viewed as muddling their way through toward compromised ends, whereas, they adopt mottos such as "No Compromise in Defense of Mother Earth." They are voluntarily poor and live lifestyles that minimally impact earth. Their actions are self-directed, and they do what they can with the resources they have. They realize that their actions will not reverse past destruction, but hope to change society's consciousness, albeit slowly. Finally, eco-warriors believe that the anti-corporate globalization movement is crucial to the success of radical environmentalism.

Informative, readable, and interesting, *Eco-Warriors* makes a valuable contribution to the understanding of the radical environmental movement. Highly recommended for personal and library collections.

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