

Review: Green Syndicalism: An Alternative Red/Green Vision

By Jeff Shantz

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Shantz, Jeff. *Green Syndicalism: An Alternative Red/Green Vision*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2012. 186 pp. ISBN: 9780815633075, hardcover, US \$39.95.

Shantz's work provides an interesting interlacing of environmental and labor activist theories. He proposes that environmental justice is not separate from other forms of social justice. In particular, he focuses on how the labor movement and class interests are framed. He argues that many environmental activists see workers as part of the problem in achieving pro-environment goals. Yet Shantz counters that workers can be part of the solution. He structures this argument by providing an in-depth introduction that examines various theories in both the environmental (ecology) and labor movements. Throughout the work, Shantz engages deeply with theory. He also provides concrete examples, such as the extensive treatment of Judi Bari and the Earth First! movement in California. He concludes by shifting from a focus on how the environmental movement can be more inclusive of workers to showing how the labor movement and rank-and-file union members are already concerned about and active in addressing environmental issues.

The scope of the examination is deep and focused on specific examples that exemplify the author's arguments. The author provides examples from both U.S. and Canadian environmental and labor movements. His point of view and experiences in Canadian organizations offers a different perspective that highlights both the unique elements of Canada and the U.S. and the similarities between the two countries. Those unfamiliar with the environmental and labor movements in these countries may be at a disadvantage in pursuing this advanced analysis. In addition, the work is challenging for those less familiar with the theoretical background. Thus, the intended audience is the engaged specialist, such as advanced scholars and scholar-practitioners in these movements. One of the challenges for academics may be that while theory is a significant element of the book, Shantz's approach to theory is deeply informed by lived experience and larger issues surrounding praxis. The challenge of a scholarly approach to social justice is constantly at the forefront in this text.

The author excels at providing examples that illustrate his points. The depth of detail and the clarity these examples provide is an exceptional element of this book. One recommendation for future editions or follow-up work would be to provide a scenario that parallels these examples demonstrating a green syndicalist future or an example of a green syndicalist business. The author provides an example of a co-op that seems to be somewhat suggestive of a syndicate, but it would provide further clarity if more of this

red/green vision could be sketched for the reader. On the other hand, if there are specific challenges in doing this, it would be helpful to know what these are as well.

Shantz has effectively demonstrated that environmentalism and labor activism do not need to be antagonistic movements. He has provided examples of organizations that have united these efforts and have in turn shown ways in which other social justice efforts can also be incorporated including feminism and civil rights efforts for minority groups. The book is a necessary contribution to tearing down the barriers that have separated groups, which are ultimately committed to the goal of social justice.

Thus, Shantz does an excellent job of presenting detailed examples that show how it is possible to interweave the issues facing environmentalists and workers and address the concerns both have about their health, safety, livelihoods and future.

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