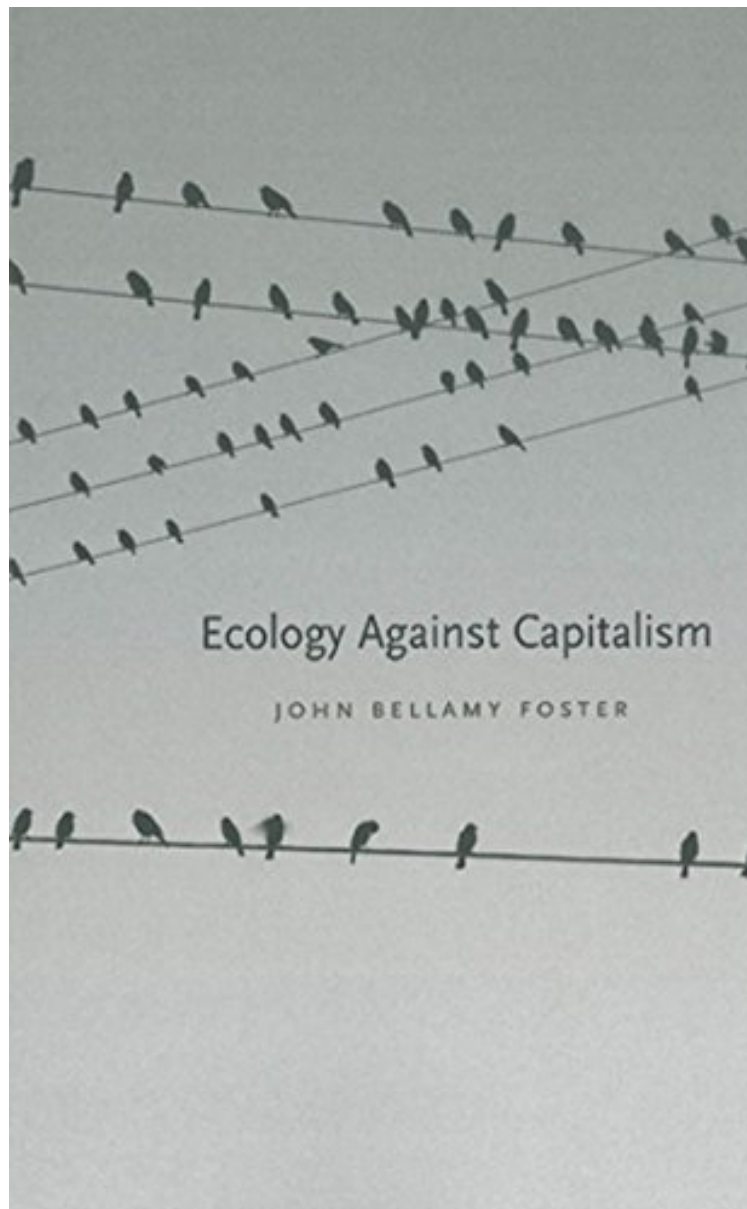


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Ecology Against Capitalism

John Bellamy Foster

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John Bellamy Foster : Ecology Against Capitalism before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ecology Against Capitalism:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Eye opening and thought provokingBy S. DischingerThis book was difficult to read in that it confronts the reader by presenting the dismal truth, but it does en excellent job of explaining multiple aspects, such as politics and societal influences, demanding the reader consider the issues further.0 of 0

people found the following review helpful. nice goods. ThanksBy WhitesheepPrompt delivery, nice goods. Thanks.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. There are better books by the same authorBy Ashtar Command"Ecology against Capitalism" is a collection of 12 essays written by John Bellamy Foster, current editor of the Monthly Review, an independent socialist publication founded by Paul Sweezy. Foster is the author of several books on the ecological crisis from a Green Marxist perspective. He believes that capitalism's "accumulation for accumulation's sake" makes it incompatible with environmentalist politics (not to mention the environment!), and that any effective Green political action must therefore be anti-capitalist and socialist.Foster further believes that a socialist society must exist in harmony with nature. He mentions (non-socialist) Aldo Leopold's land ethic in a positive light, and seems favourably disposed to the Romantic socialist William Morris. The author discusses Jevon's paradox and seems to accept that the paradox is real (increased energy conservation always leads to *increased* energy consumption, rather than the reverse). There are only two ways around the paradox: a lower level of technology than today, and/or a centralized planned economy. Presumably, the author wants both. Bellamy Foster also criticizes "sustainable development", a concept he regards as simply another form of accumulation for accumulation's sake.As I pointed out in a critical review of Foster's "The Ecological Revolution", it's virtually impossible to combine Marxism as usually understood with Green politics. Marxism is pro-growth. Indeed, it's main argument against capitalism is that it supposedly hampers further economic growth. Marx would have looked upon Bellamy Foster as a "petty-bourgeois socialist". I also noticed that Foster supports economic growth and development in the Third World. He doesn't explain how the introduction of Green Romantic socialism in Europe and North America will increase growth in the Third World (it would rather make the world market collapse!) or what level of development he deems acceptable. In one article, he points out that South Korea's rapid economic growth has led to serious environmental damage, Seoul being one of the most polluted capitals in Asia. Presumably, being a Newly Industrialized Country is therefore a no-no. In "The Ecological Revolution", Foster expresses support for Cuba, Bolivia and Venezuela. But Cuba and Bolivia have very little economic growth, while the growth of Venezuela is dependent on selling oil to Europe, North America and NICs. But in a Romantic Green world, nobody would be interested in buying oil...However, my main objection to "Ecology against Capitalism" is simply that the book is immensely boring and not very useful. Only two articles strike me as interesting: "The Limits of Environmentalism without Class: Lessons from the Ancient Forest Struggle in the Pacific Northwest" and "Malthus's Essays on Population at Age 200". Otherwise, I think people interested in Green Marxism should read "The Ecological Revolution", and perhaps "Marx's Ecology" if they crave a more theoretical approach. And my critical review of the former. ;-)

In recent years John Bellamy Foster has emerged as a leading theorist of the Marxist perspective on ecology. His seminal book *Marx's Ecology* (Monthly Review Press, 2000) discusses the place of ecological issues within the intellectual history of Marxism and on the philosophical foundations of a Marxist ecology, and has become a major point of reference in ecological debates. This historical and philosophical focus is now supplemented by more directly political engagement in his new book, *Ecology against Capitalism*. In a broad-ranging treatment of contemporary ecological politics, Foster deals with such issues as pollution, sustainable development, technological responses to environmental crisis, population growth, soil fertility, the preservation of ancient forests, and the "new economy" of the Internet age. Foster's introduction sets out the unifying themes of these essays enabling the reader to draw from them a consolidated approach to a rapidly-expanding field of debate which is of critical importance in our times. Within these debates on the politics of ecology, Foster's work develops an important and distinctive perspective. Where many of these debates assume a basic divergence of "red" and "green" issues, and are concerned with the exact terms of a trade-off between them, Foster argues that Marxismproperly understoodalready provides the framework within which ecological questions are best approached. This perspective is advanced here in accessible and concrete form, taking account of the major positions in contemporary ecological debate.

About the AuthorJohn Bellamy Foster is editor of Monthly . He is professor of sociology at the University of Oregon and author of *The Ecological Revolution*, *The Great Financial Crisis* (with Fred Magdoff), *Critique of Intelligent Design* (with Brett Clark and Richard York), *Ecology Against Capitalism*, *Marx's Ecology*, and *The Vulnerable Planet*.