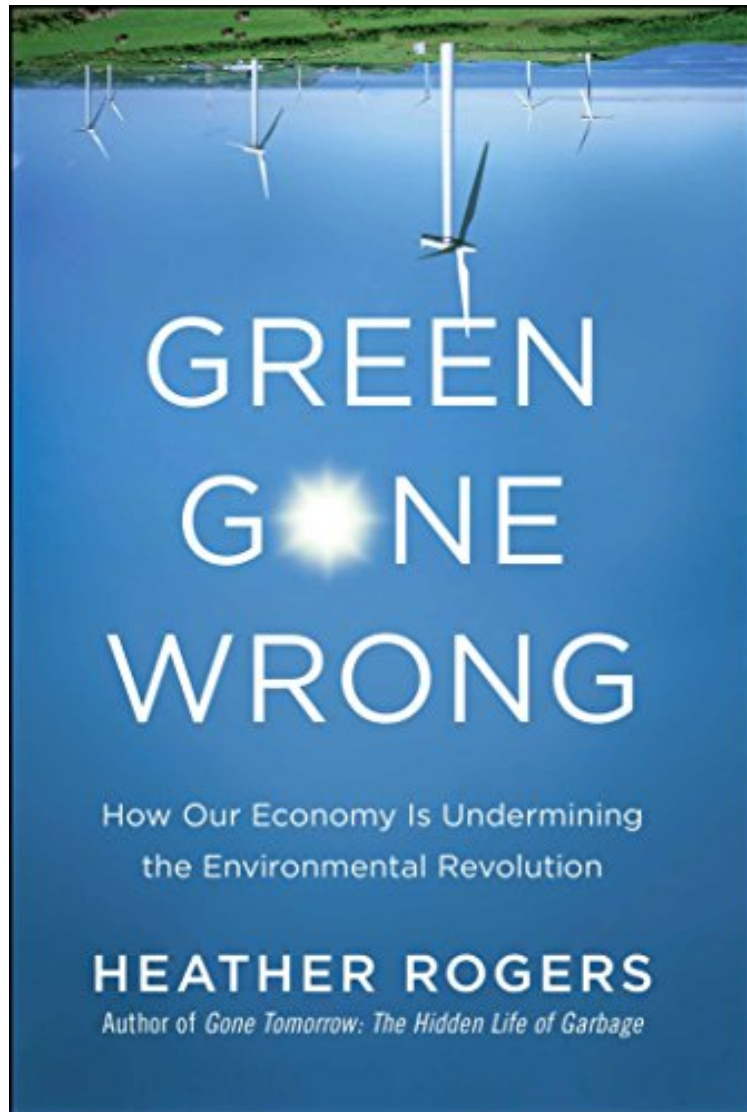


Green Gone Wrong: How Our Economy Is Undermining the Environmental Revolution

Heather Rogers

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Heather Rogers : Green Gone Wrong: How Our Economy Is Undermining the Environmental Revolution before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Green Gone Wrong: How Our Economy Is Undermining the Environmental Revolution:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Combines Holistic Thinking with Drill-Down Detail By Robert David STEELE Vivas This is a solid five in my view because the author goes beyond weaving a story about green gone wrong in three main areas (food, shelter, transportation), providing what almost all other books miss: the systems

of systems "its all connected" and "what's good for one part of the system may be very bad for other parts," both views developed by, among others, Buckminster Fuller, Robert Ackoff, and Herman Daly. As much as I read, I can say up front that I found no false notes or glibness in this book, and found many nuggets that were new to me. Among the concepts covered by the book that were new to me were "food miles" (a portion of "true cost"), Eathship, Passivhaus (Passive House), Baugruppe (families hiring community builders directly, cutting out the middlemen developers), Agro-Ecology, Socio-Ecology, and the Jevons Paradox (conservation savings get poured back into expansion, nullifying the savings). Two bottom lines up front: EDUCATION of both the public and the politicians, and of all those associated with creating anything, is the sucking chest wound in our society. Green to Gold, Cradle to Cradle, Sustainable Design, Ecological Economics, all of this is going nowhere unless we can ramp up the speed and depth of public education on these topics. GREEN TECHNOLOGY MAINTENANCE REPAIR is the other sucking chest wound. The momentum is not there yet, meaning that well-intentioned groups can buy in to ecologically-sensible technology, but the company that installs it is generally not local, and there are no local green maintenance repair skill sets on call. This struck me as a huge opportunity for community colleges. In discussing the need for Political Will the author is better than most in going back into history, to Science Magazine in 1913, to point out that the knowledge of need has always been with us, but it is the politicians and the complacent public that have refused to connect with the knowledge and take (or demand) action. FOOD Organic costs more because it integrates all of the true costs, whereas conventional farming externalizes true costs to the public and future generations US department of Agriculture is totally hosed--the regulations are written to favor the industrial-size "dirty" operations--and its definition of "organic" is so totally corrupt that the serious organic farmers have opted out of USDA certification. STATES NEED TO NULLIFY FEDERAL REGULATIONS for state-only organic farmers, butchers, and others. It's time to take the federal government OUT of state enterprises and its time to eliminate a great deal of inter-state commerce along with absentee landlords, IMHO. Third party certifications of everything are totally hosed and generally corrupt. US economic and agricultural policy is not only not working, it is killing what DOES work. Big problem amenable to Internet/Information Communications Technology is the gap between many small farmers with small loads, and buyers that need multiple small loads to meet their aggregate larger need. We are still not doing enough in business-to-business matchmaking on the Internet. Ancient farming systems are now coming back into mode as people discover that they worked without all of the "modern" poisons that we seek to use to alter systems we do not understand for temporal profit. SHELTER Using case studies, the author illuminates multiple really fascinating approaches to nested residence and working environments that are "passive" in taking in heat from the sun during the day and releasing it at night (or during the day for hot water), using wax filled-walls to melt heat in and then harden heat out, all very very interesting. This is where it becomes critical to plan for maintenance and repair. TRANSPORTATION Bio-fuels are destroying hundreds of thousands of acres and ultimately cost more and emit more--one ton of palm oil, the author tells us, emits 33 tons of CO₂, or ten times as much as petroleum. Indonesia, which is one of the eight major demographics of the future, is a case study in how decentralization of government power has given rise to massive corruption at the provincial and local levels, with huge plantations entering to destroy fragile agro-forestry systems that have been working for centuries. Plantations being in tons of fertilizers, insecticides, and herbicides. The author slams the World Bank International Finance Corporation (IFC) for doing loans that ignore its own internal studies on how bad those loans will be to the larger outcomes sought by the World Bank and others. The author fails the US auto industry on green vehicles, and I cannot help but contrast this with the hypocrisy of President Obama recently declaring them a success story. The author goes back in time to discuss how both the oil and automobile companies deliberately and with malice aforethought, bought up public transportation companies across America, and then put them out of business so as to promote automobiles and gasoline as the only options. I had heard of water as a source of hydrogen energy, but the author adds details unknown to me, including an overview of Stanford R. Ovshinsky, who uses solar power to achieve electrolysis of water to produce hydrogen. The author's view on carbon trade as fraud coincides with mine--this is subprime mortgages for the entire Earth. The author shows in detail a couple of examples in India in which fraudulent claims are made all along the line in self-contained fraud systems. QUOTE (176): The carbon credit system--a series of convoluted financial instruments that serve Wall Street and the City by allowing them to use Earth's atmosphere as a casino--is poised for mass adoption. QUOTE (186): When I went to the places where green products are made, I encountered industries with insatiable appetites for raw materials. I saw corporations collaborating with government officials who abused their power to facilitate unfettered resource extraction that also mauled indigenous and peasant communities. I witnessed the unremitting evisceration of native forestlands, and the broadsiding of successful solutions such as beyond-organic farming and low-emissions vehicles. While in developing countries, I glimpsed how plundering ecosystems continues to make perfect economic sense, even for businesses that are green. Environmental responsibility practiced this way looks more like camouflage to enable ongoing destructive practices rather than a break from the toxic past. The author ends with the observation that the market system got us into this mess, it cannot be relied upon to get us out. For that she recommends a combination of bottom-up local action (to which I would add the immediate nullification across every state of federal regulations that impede small business success), and learned government mandates that set standards, such as 2000 watts a day per person. The author is weak

in a number of areas such as those addressed by Acts of God: The Unnatural History of Natural Disaster in America and The Next Catastrophe: Reducing Our Vulnerabilities to Natural, Industrial, and Terrorist Disasters but on balance this is a SOLID FIVE and makes me look forward to reading the author's first book, next on my list, Gone Tomorrow: The Hidden Life of Garbage. Rather than list a number of other books I want to point to my books lists at Phi Beta Iota the Public Intelligence Blog, because from this one book any reader might want to go in a number of related directions including: Capitalism (Good Bad); Corruption; Environmental Problems; Environmental Solutions; History (e.g. 1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus; Nature, Diet, Design; Values; Voices Lost, etcetera. All my reviews there (at Phi Beta Iota) lead back to their page. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Ms Rogers nails it--a super re-cap about how "going green" (definition) has been over ...By CustomerMs Rogers nails it--a super re-cap about how "going green" (definition) has been over used and has lost what it originally meant!! An excellent read and super research--well thought out!! 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Must Read for Every Skeptic !!!!By AmberVery Informative, Accurate Truthful.I KNOW Beyond a shadow of a doubt that Alternative Powers such as Solar Wind Generators WORK !!!!!I have Several friends here in Colorado whose houses run perfectly on nothing but Solar or Wind and that the Solar array in Southern Colorado supplies the entire San Luis Valley with power. So when anyone tells you that Alternative Energy isn't feasible, they are either inexperienced, have a hidden agenda such as profiting in some way from COAL, GAS OIL, or are naive enough to believe the Propaganda by those with the hidden agendas. Alternative Energy creates new Jobs through the need of manufacturers, people to maintain repairing them, while helping to restore our Planet to the Garden of Eden it once was hellip;..New even more efficient - cost effective technologies are surfacing every day. Alternative Energy IS Unequivocally the way to our Future.

In Green Gone Wrong environmental writer Heather Rogers blasts through the marketing buzz of big corporations and asks a simple question: Do today's much-touted "green" products--carbon offsets, organic food, biofuels, and eco-friendly cars and homes--really work? Implicit in efforts to go green is the promise that global warming can be stopped by swapping out dirty goods for "clean" ones. But can earth-friendly products really save the planet? This far-reaching, riveting narrative explores how the most readily available solutions to environmental crisis may be disastrously off the mark. Rogers travels the world tracking how the conversion from a "petro" to a "green" society affects the most fundamental aspects of life--food, shelter, and transportation. Reporting from some of the most remote places on earth, Rogers uncovers shocking results that include massive clear-cutting, destruction of native ecosystems, and grinding poverty. Relying simply on market forces, people with good intentions wanting to just "do something" to help the planet are left feeling confused and powerless. Green Gone Wrong reveals a fuller story, taking the reader into forests, fields, factories, and boardrooms around the world to draw out the unintended consequences, inherent obstacles, and successes of eco-friendly consumption. What do the labels "USDA Certified Organic" and "Fair Trade" really mean on a vast South American export-driven organic farm? A super-low-energy "eco-village" in Germany's Black Forest demonstrates that green homes dramatically shrink energy use, so why aren't we using this technology in America? The decisions made in Detroit's executive suites have kept Americans driving gas-guzzling automobiles for decades, even as U.S. automakers have European models that clock twice the mpg. Why won't they sell these cars domestically? And what does carbon offsetting really mean when projects can so easily fail? In one case thousands of trees planted in drought-plagued Southern India withered and died, releasing any CO2 they were meant to neutralize. Expertly reported, this gripping expose pieces together a global picture of what's happening in the name of today's environmentalism. Green Gone Wrong speaks to anyone interested in climate change and the future of the natural world, as well as those who want to act but are caught not knowing who, or what, to believe to protect the planet. Rogers casts a sober eye on what's working and what's not, fearlessly pushing ahead the debate over how to protect the planet.

From Booklist *Starred* In Gone Tomorrow (2005), Rogers detailed everything that is wrong about wasteful packaging and choked landfills. Here she exposes how the "green" movement is failing to live up to the promise of sustainability and stewardship of the environment when the solutions are hijacked by economic and political interests. Industrial organic farms now resemble the conventional farms they were meant to replace; biofuels such as ethanol and palm oil raise food prices and replace precious rain forests, displacing indigenous peoples and creating more greenhouse gases than they save; carbon dioxide offsetting projects are mismanaged into failure. Yet, despite the title, Rogers found solutions that do work, such as truly organic farming methods, cutting-edge green architecture in Germany and the UK, and plug-in hybrid vehicles. Yet our corporate and political leaders continue to incentivize what poses the least challenge to established power structures, leaving out those such as the dedicated, truly organic farmers, who can barely make ends meet. Once again Rogers' clear-headed approach proves effective in uncovering the truths behind the mantle of greenwashing. --David Siegfried "The climate crisis is far too urgent to squander another decade on false solutions. This carefully researched, deeply human, and eminently sensible investigation arrives just in the nick of time. Let's hope it inspires a radical course correction." --Naomi Klein, author

of The Shock Doctrine "Heather Rogers reminds us with vivid examples that there's no way we can just subcontract our environmental conscience to the new breed of green marketers. We have a very narrow window to preserve some version of our planet, and we can't afford the kind of egregious mistakes this volume identifies with such precision. If it's too good to be true, it's not true--even if it comes with a shiny green wrapper."--Bill McKibben, author *Earth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet* "With deft and adventuresome reporting from around the world, Heather Rogers looks beneath the surface of today's market-based "solutions" to our environmental challenges and skillfully distinguishes between reality and illusion. Business as usual won't do, Rogers tells us, no matter how much we green it." --Annie Leonard, author of *The Story of Stuff* "Heather Rogers brilliantly and lethally exposes "green" capitalism for the chicanery that it is. While it may be disappointing to find out that "organic" and even "fair trade" don't mean squat - not to mention, of course, "carbon offsetting," which turns out to be even stupider than it sounds - these pages make clear what the answer is: stop making colorful excuses for the system that's driving us off the cliff, and instead make shifts in our economic priorities to bring about real change. May Rogers's book guide our feet." --The Yes Men "By going beyond exposeacute; to analysis, Rogers gives a deeper assessment of environmental problems and solutions than the usual global-warming investigative book."--Publishers Weekly Rogers "exposes how the "green" movement is failing to live up to the promise of sustainability and stewardship of the environment when the solutions are hijacked by economic and political interests. [Her] clear-headed approach proves effective in uncovering the truths behind the mantle of greenwashing." --Booklist About the Author Heather Rogers is a journalist and author. She has written for the *New York Times Magazine*, *Mother Jones*, and *The Nation*. Her first book, *Gone Tomorrow: The Hidden Life of Garbage*, traces the history and politics of household garbage in the United States.