

Whole Earth Discipline: An Ecopragmatist Manifesto

The first part of this review serves as an introduction to Environmentalism's Impact on World Poverty section of book recommendations.

Arguably, Stewart Brand can be called the father, or at least the godfather of modern environmentalism. Publisher of the famed Whole Earth Catalog, he comes with impeccable environmentalist credentials. With *Whole Earth Discipline: An Ecopragmatist Manifesto* he joins other "ecopragmatists", like Patrick Moore, co-founder of Greenpeace, Bjorn Lomborg, founder of the Copenhagen Consensus, James McWilliams, author of *Just Food* and energy expert Robert Bryce, author of *Power Hungry*, who rely on facts and science when questioning popular environmental beliefs. What all these environmentalists have in common is the realization that utopia is somewhere in the future. It might be far into the future, or it might arrive this decade or this century. But for now we have to contend with the laws of physics and other realities as we constantly move forward in our quest for a cleaner, environmentally sound environment. What they all realize, too, is that many of our environmental policies are very detrimental to the world's poor and hinder their ability to escape grinding poverty. These policies are not only a form of cultural imperialism, but, also, hypocritical and blatantly unfair to developing countries. After all, the developed world; i.e. the wealthy countries had access to cheap energy and polluted our environment on our way to riches, so how can we deny the poor the same access? These countries will have something we didn't and that is help and technology to clean up their mess far faster than we did. First step though is to relieve hunger and gain some wealth. We've proved that the environment will recover just fine.

Brand covers all this. His chapters on urbanization titled *City Planet* and *Urban Promise* are exceptionally clear and document the environmental benefits of urban living, an anathema to radical environmentalists, but nevertheless, an undeniable fact.