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Voices for the Earth: A Treasury of the Sierra Club Bulletins, 1893-1977, A. Gilliam, Editor

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VOICES FOR THE EARTH: A TREASURY OF THE SIERRA CLUB BULLETINS 1893-1977

A. GILLIAM, Editor

San Francisco: Sierra Club Books. 1979. Pp. 592. \$19.95.

Gathered together within the covers of this book is an engrossing spectrum of contributions to the Sierra Club Bulletins embracing a span of three-quarters of a century plus. The contributions begin in 1893 with an essay by John Muir, and as the essays march through the decades they catalogue the history of Sierra Club concerns. As expressed in the foreword by Michael McCloskey, “[the] Sierra Club has made a transition from a hardy band of John Muir’s followers in California to a national society of environmental activists. The link that holds the entire membership together is the Sierra Club Bulletin.” Ann Gilliam, editor of the book, truly has gathered the best of the Bulletin writing, including contributions by William O. Douglas, Wallace Stegner, Jacques Cousteau, David Brower, A. Starker Leopold, Garrett Hardin, Bernard deVoto, Eliot Porter, and Ansel Adams, amongst many others.

The essays reflect the change from a policy of conservation in the early years to one of environmentalism and militancy in the last decade of the environmental movement.

Those parts dedicated to the militant political efforts taken by the Sierra Club to protect the environment are of particular interest, it seems to me. There is a wealth of information and argument provided on the leading environmental issues of the 1970s with the impact of the energy crisis pushing its way in. There are articles on strip mining by Wayne Davis, radioactive risks of pollution by Jerold Lowenstein, radioactive wastes by John Holdver, how to live without nuclear power by Michael McCloskey, and many others. Also, there are brilliant contributions by Jacques Cousteau on saving the seas, Roger Olmstead on the alternative to pesticides, and Garrett Hardin on population.

Not everyone will agree with everything that is said in these essays, but everyone will find something that is of interest in the great variety of issues addressed in this generous book of over five hundred pages.

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