

Business Ethics and the Natural Environment

Written by Administrator

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Newton, Lisa H. (2005) *Business Ethics and the Natural Environment*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Business Ethics and the Natural Environment examines the present status of relations between corporate enterprise and the natural environment in the world today. Discusses such questions as: What obligations does a corporation have toward the environment? To respect entities unprotected by law? To care about future generations? Argues that environmentally-friendly business practices yield dividends exceeding expectations, and that the competitive firm of the 21st century will follow "green" standards. Provides a background in ethics, a survey of business ethics, an account of environmental philosophy, an overview of environmental legal issues, and an account of the problems associated with globalization.

Review: "With business's renewed focus on sustainable growth, Newton's hopeful book comes at the right time, providing us theoretically sound, eloquently presented, and practically wise frameworks and conclusions." Dennis J. Moberg, Santa Clara University, and President, Society for Business Ethics

"This excellent book perfectly balances philosophical and case study analysis to help students explore within today's political and legal framework the responsibilities of business and of individuals to the natural environment." Mark Sagoff, University of Maryland

Here is an excerpt from the book's Preface:

"Why I Wrote This Book

First, of course, there are the urgent practical, social, and moral problems. Things are not going well for the world. There is war, there is terror, and there is political instability. But the world has always had war, terror, and political instability; all these we have known since our youth. In addition to all these, underlying and exacerbating them, there is also an increasing sense that the natural environment of the globe is under terrible pressure, and this fear is quite new, no more than half a century old. There are new logging ventures in equatorial Africa, which enrich corrupt elites while slicing roads through forests recently untouched, making paths for the

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poachers who think nothing of killing the last wild gorillas, chimpanzees, and white rhinoceros. New governments in South America are pressing for economic development, which may come only at the expense of the Amazonian rainforest, home to half the species on earth. The Arctic National Wildlife Reserve may be invaded to acquire new reserves of oil. They say the great fisheries off New England are fished out. There are graphs that show that the earth is getting warmer, probably because of all the new carbon we are putting in the air through burning fossil fuels. If it gets much warmer we may lose some island nations, and the people of the Seychelles are very upset at that. They say the great coral reefs are bleaching, beginning to die. Hunters may take the last whales from the ocean, the last tigers from the forests, and eventually the last wild elephants from the African plains. We do not seem to be able to get a real handle on the problems. As stated, they seem real and objective enough, and no matter how serious or otherwise they turn out to be, they should be addressed and brought under control. Yet every statement of the problems (including in this paragraph), let alone every proposed solution, seems politically tinged, part of some political agenda, therefore safely ignored by those of the opposite political persuasion, and no one seems to know how to break through that perception.

We need methods to sort out the problems and the passionately held positions on the problems. One reason to write this book, then, is to analyze the conflicts that bedevil us in our daily lives, and see if formulations, and sensible courses of action, can be found that will dissolve the dilemmas and allow us to proceed peacefully.” (pp. vii-viii)