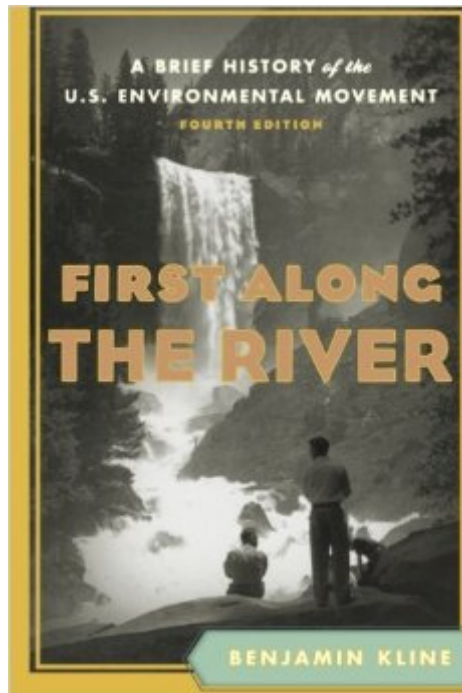


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First Along The River: A Brief History Of The U.S. Environmental Movement



Synopsis

First Along the River introduces students to the U.S. environmental movement. Concise, accessible, and informative, this book provides students with a balanced, historical perspective on the history of the environmental movement in relation to major social and political events in U.S. history. The book highlights important people and events, places critical concepts in context, and shows the impact of government, industry, and population on the American landscape. The fourth edition includes a new chapter that covers the entire environmental record of the George W. Bush administration, and the early record of the Obama administration.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Kline, a Professor of Environmental, British Empire, and African history, offers a no-equivocation review of American environmental history. Unusually versed in history and philosophy, Kline opens his account with quotes from European philosophers and theologians, emphasizing that Calvin saw prosperity as a sign of a godly life. A recurring theme, the acquisitive, exploitative nature of the immigrants, whose motivation was to dominate nature, is presented in a quote from historian Roderick Nash. "A massive assault was directed at the new world environment was directed at the New World in the name of civilization and Christianity. Progress became synonymous with exploitation. Man slashed the earth in search of raw materials." Kline provides uncommon, acerbic quotes from well known people. For example, Roger Williams, often remembered as a benign and tolerant founder of Rhode Island is quoted, speaking of the Bay Colonists: "They have a depraved

appetite aftergreat portions of land."And from John Muir: Awakening from the stupefying effects of the vice of overindustry and the deadly apathy of luxury.....Many of the chapter headings also express a negative attitude toward the materialistic side of American society. As expected he does give credit to Muir, George Perkins Marsh, the author of "Man and Nature" (1864), warning Americans about following the pathway of earlier civilizations that declined when they destroyed their environment, Theodore Roosevelt, Carl Schurz the 19th Century reformer, and other persons with progressive orientations. Let me acknowledge that personal research has led me to understand that Kline is right about many of the things he criticizes.

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