



Protecting the Planet: Environmental Champions from Conservation to Climate Change

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Covering the science and history of climate change, *Protecting the Planet* represents an ambitious attempt to cover the entire context of climate change, from origins to possible solutions. Unfortunately, it is only partially successful.

There are four main thematic parts to this hefty book. The first and shortest part explains the science of climate change and rebukes deniers. The second, much longer section provides a relatively quick overview of the history of environmental protection and preservation. Third, the book details short bios of modern climate activists, including ecologists and celebrities. Finally, the book presents potential large- and small-scale solutions to climate change.

By providing a historical context for climate change, *Protecting the Planet* makes an ambitious go at providing perspective to a problem too often seen as modern. Its focus on climate “heroes” humanizes a struggle usually represented by legislation and corporate action. However, many early historical events are given too little attention, and even modern ones lack in-depth analysis. When the book transitions to activist biographies, it becomes a dizzying cascade of information. The book’s final section, “Part Five: Finding Solutions,” represents a good, quick manual for effective grassroots action against climate change, but would function more effectively if it stood alone as its own book.

The writing here has a lot of personality and is consistently interesting. However, charged commentary on political actions, such as the Iraq war and Reaganomics, limit the likelihood that it will draw the unconverted across the aisle.

Protecting the Planet is a quirky contribution to an area of climate-change literature that doesn’t tend to get a lot of attention. Its comprehensive timeline of climate-change history will be both interesting and useful to educators.

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