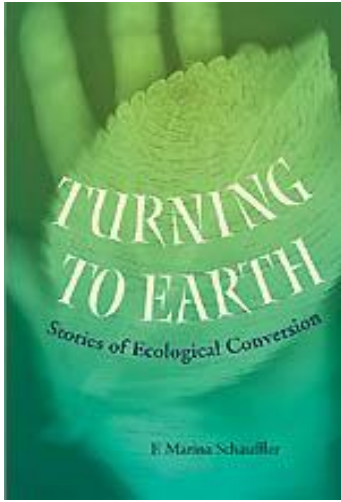


BOOK REVIEW

Schauffler, F. Marina. *Turning to Earth: Stories of Ecological Conversion*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003.



Turning to Earth offers a window into the heart of environmental change, moving beyond the traditional reliance on policy reforms and technological measures. It charts the course of 'ecological conversion', a dynamic inner process by which people come to ally themselves with the natural world and speak out on its behalf. Stories by ecological converts illuminate a critical realm long neglected by environmental scholars and activists - how the terrain of spirit, psyche, and conscience shape our commitment to Earth.

Marina Schauffler's engaging exploration of 'inner ecology' deftly weaves together numerous autobiographical accounts with insights from the fields of ecocriticism, ecopsychology, environmental philosophy, and environmental education.

Through chapters entitled Remembrance, Reflection, Revelation, Reciprocity, Resistance, and Ritual, *Turning to Earth* extends the parameters of contemporary environmental discussion by illustrating how substantive change hinges not just on political and institutional reforms but also on profound inner transformation. The compelling life narratives of ecological converts provide inspiration and direction for the growing number of activists, educators, scholars, and citizens committed to changing the world from the inside out.

An opening portrait of the writer and activist Terry Tempest Williams traces her deepening devotion to Earth. Each subsequent chapter explores a key element of ecological conversion, drawing primarily on the personal testimony of Williams and five other pioneering writers: Rachel Carson, Alice Walker, Edward Abbey, Scott Russell Sanders, and N. Scott Momaday.

Schauffler writes: 'Those who turn to Earth ... acknowledge that their lives are governed by a strong sense of the sacred, an abiding wonder and gratitude in the mystery of being. Spirituality, in their view, constitutes "living in accordance with the dynamism of life" ... [it] becomes an ongoing creative act that infuses every facet of their lives.' On a personal level, Schauffler notes that her 'impulse to heal the Earth clearly comes from a passionate bond to place, an active immersion in the mystery and complexity of being.'

This is a book that will inspire, inform and challenge the reader. It is a 'must read' for anyone committed to Earth.