



Ecological Identity: Becoming a Reflective Environmentalist

By Mitchell Thomashow

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Ecological Identity: Becoming a Reflective Environmentalist By Mitchell Thomashow

Mitchell Thomashow, a preeminent educator, shows how environmental studies can be taught from different perspective, one that is deeply informed by personal reflection. Through theoretical discussion as well as hands-on participatory learning approaches, Thomashow provides concerned citizens, teachers, and students with the tools needed to become reflective environmentalists. What do I know about the place where I live? Where do things come from? How do I connect to the earth? What is my purpose as a human being? These are the questions that Thomashow identifies as being at the heart of environmental education. Developing a profound sense of oneself in relationship to natural and social ecosystems is necessary grounding for the difficult work of environmental advocacy. In this book he provides a clear and accessible guide to the learning experiences that accompany the construction of an "ecological identity": using the direct experience of nature as a framework for personal decisions, professional choices, political action, and spiritual inquiry. Ecological Identity covers the different types of environmental thought and activism (using John Muir, Henry David Thoreau, and Rachel Carson as environmental archetypes, but branching out into ecofeminism and bioregionalism), issues of personal property and consumption, political identity and citizenship, and integrating ecological identity work into environmental studies programs. Each chapter has accompanying learning activities such as the Sense of Place Map, a Community Network Map, and the Political Genogram, most of which can be carried out on an individual basis. Although people from diverse backgrounds become environmental activists and enroll in environmental studies programs, they are rarely encouraged to examine their own history, motivations, and aspirations. Thomashow's approach is to reveal the depth of personal experience that underlies contemporary environmentalism and to explore, interpret, and nurture the learning spaces made possible when people are moved to contemplate their experience of nature.



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Editorial Review

Review

This book opens up the doors of ecological perception with a unique integration of scientific knowledge, creative imagery, and compassionate insight. Mitchell Thomashow gives us the lenses to see what is essential for our collective future -- the intrinsic connection between the local and the global. We are all in his debt.

(Mary Evelyn Tucker, Yale University)

"At a moment when the environmental crisis seems so intractable to so many, Mitch Thomashow enacts here the perennial service of the wise and compassionate educator-citizen: to help us find greater power for what we do in a deeper understanding of who we are."

(Paul Gorman, Executive Director, National Religious Partnership for the Environment)

"In its density and strong voice alike, this fine book reflects Mitchell Thomashow's years of teaching in an innovative environmental studies program. I enormously admire both his probing discussions of spiritual, psychological, and political issues and his highly practical exercises for developing a sense of ecological identity."

(John Elder, Professor of English and Environmental Studies, Middlebury College)

"Mitch Thomashow has written a thoughtful, thought-provoking book that offers radical insights into our common ecological ignorance: How do the places we live influence who we are? Where does one discover the ecological self? How does healing the earth lead to personal empowerment? What if we lived our lives as if nature mattered? What if we became truly 'reflective' environmentalists? To explore these fascinating questions, read this book."

(Ed Grumbine, Director, Sierra Institute Field Studies program, University of California Extension)

" *Ecological Identity* is a pathbreaking and compelling work that sheds clear light on how we establish a stable, satisfying, and grounded identity. This book is particularly important for teachers, educators, and psychologists --- those charged with helping the young to establish a thoughtful, informed, and competent sense of themselves in relation to the earth."

(David W. Orr, Environmental Studies Program, Oberlin College)

"Mitch Thomashow draws on his solid authority as an environmental educator in this coherent and insightful pedagogy for environmental professionals. His creative teaching activities generate an unusual degree of integrative and transformative learning. Thomashow takes the next step in ecological literacy work as he

articulates the experiential steps to a contextual relational way of thinking. I particularly applaud his illumination of the role of personal values and experience of place as central in shaping human response to the environment. Student quotes bring the material alive, providing a sense of real people grappling with real problems. Thomashow's work makes a major contribution to the environmental literature, one which will be appreciated by many teaching in this area."

(Stephanie Kaza, author of *The Attentive Heart*)

"Mitchell Thomashow has created a gem. *Ecological Identity* is probing, thoughtful, and profoundly evocative. Thomashow reminds us that environmentalism is much more than a set of practices; it is a way of being. Developing, consciously cultivating, an ecological identity takes us on a path of self-knowledge and wisdom. *Ecological Identity* speaks to educators but implies that we are all educators. Its concepts and innovative learning tools are adaptable to a wide range of groups and settings."

(Frances Moore Lappe, author of *Diet for a Small Planet*, co-author of *The Quickening of America: Rebuilding our Nation, Remaking Our Lives*, co-founder and co-director of the Center for Living Democracy and co-founder of the Institute for Food and Development Policy)

From the Back Cover

The author shows how environmental studies can be taught from a perspective that is deeply informed by personal reflection. Through theoretical discussion as well as hands-on participatory learning, Thomashow provides concerned citizens, teachers, and students with the tools needed to become reflective environmentalists

About the Author

Mitchell Thomashow is the Chairperson of the Department of Environmental Studies at Antioch New England Graduate School.

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Daniel Evans:

The guide with title Ecological Identity: Becoming a Reflective Environmentalist possesses a lot of information that you can study it. You can get a lot of gain after read this book. This kind of book exist new understanding the information that exist in this guide represented the condition of the world at this point.

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This Ecological Identity: Becoming a Reflective Environmentalist is great publication for you because the content which is full of information for you who also always deal with world and possess to make decision every minute. This particular book reveal it details accurately using great arrange word or we can point out no rambling sentences included. So if you are read this hurriedly you can have whole information in it. Doesn't mean it only will give you straight forward sentences but hard core information with attractive delivering sentences. Having Ecological Identity: Becoming a Reflective Environmentalist in your hand like getting the world in your arm, details in it is not ridiculous just one. We can say that no book that offer you world with ten or fifteen small right but this publication already do that. So , this can be good reading book. Hello Mr. and Mrs. hectic do you still doubt this?

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