



Dirty Virtues: The Emergence of Ecological Virtue Ethics

By Louke Van Wensveen

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This is the first extensive study of ecological virtue ethics and the new rhetoric of environmentalists. Based on a wide-ranging survey of environmental literature, Louke van Wensveen offers an overview of current "green" virtue language and proposes the basic elements of a matching ecological virtue theory, dubbed "dirty virtues" by ecological philosophers.

Environmental ethics is not exhausted by debates about the need to preserve rivers, our duties to bioregions, and the intrinsic value of nonhuman nature; rather, ecoliterature also contains a rich virtue language. Highlighting the integrity, diversity, internal tensions, dynamism, and visionary character of this ecological virtue language, the author shows both its historical roots and innovative features. Van Wensveen illustrates a widespread awareness of attitudes and habits that help or harm our relations with the nonhuman world. She includes a unique catalog of 189 virtues and 174 vices that mark the vision and praxis of people committed to ecological flourishing.

The second part of *Dirty Virtues* presents carefully crafted criteria to help discern genuine virtue and vice in an ecological age. Her arguments are distinguished by a critical balance of moral sources, including Aristotelian virtue theory, Christian tradition, women's experiences, psychological theory, and metaphorical representations of nonhuman nature.

Methodologically innovative and boldly interdisciplinary, *Dirty Virtues* will challenge and inspire virtue theorists, as well as environmental ethicists and theologians.

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Editorial Review

Review

"...a fascinating mixture of tradition and innovation." -- *Environmental Ethics*, Vol. 23, Summer 2001

"It brings a major focus in ethics--virtue--to ecological literature and vice versa. The result is a rich gathering of insights and a new agenda." -- *Larry Rasmussen, author of EARTH COMMUNITY, EARTH ETHICS*

About the Author

Louke van Wensveen (Los Angeles, CA) is assistant professor of theological studies at Loyola Marymount University.

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