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Fiala, Matthew

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Review: EcoMind: Changing the Way We Think, to Create the World We Want

By Frances Moore Lappé

Reviewed by Matthew Fiala

University of the District of Columbia, Washington, DC, USA

Lappé, Frances Moore. *EcoMind: Changing the Way We Think, to Create the World We Want*. Philadelphia, PA: Nation Books, 2013. 288pp. ISBN 978-1-56858-743-1. US \$16.99, paper binding.

EcoMind: Changing the Way We Think, to Create the World We Want is an invigorating and inspirational read which presents the attainable goal of environmental sustainability. In *EcoMind*, Frances Moore Lappé explores the psychology behind the formation of an environmentally responsible world. This is not a book of facts, but rather a discussion about the way we think about the facts in regards to the impending environmental crisis. This book is intended to be a guiding light for those who wish to make a difference in the world, but may otherwise be discouraged to act due to data which suggests that the planet is becoming irrevocably harmed for future generations.

In a well-organized fashion, Lappé successfully meets the purpose and intent of this book by writing in a style that allows her knowledge and experiences to be easily transferred to all audiences. From the perspective of a possibility (someone who recognizes that all possibilities exist), Lappé explores humanity's challenge of developing an ecological mindset, and in conjunction, the most common thought traps which immobilizes individuals to act. As each thought trap is explored, Lappé accurately depicts the illogical reasoning behind each trap and then offers contrasting "thought leaps" to reveal our hidden power and help the reader see the world through an ecological lens. *EcoMind* has the potential to inspire and mobilize the masses to proactively work towards environmental remediation and lasting sustainability. According to a Harris Poll cited on page 10, the lack of citizen action is due to a collective belief that we are powerless against "big companies that have too much power and influence in Washington."

The seven thought traps which are addressed by the author are intended to encourage all of us to examine, and reshape the stories we tell ourselves and others. Lappé invites the reader to suspend judgment for a moment to consider that even seemingly commonsense ideas can be dangerous if they come across in ways that trigger self-defeating emotions, fear and despair. Lappé dismantles seven common "thought traps"—from limits to growth to the failings of democracy – while encouraging individuals to create connections with other persons, groups and organizations to further cultivate an ecological-centered mindset.

This book makes an excellent addition to undergraduate psychology and continuing education courses related to environmental sustainability outreach & education. *EcoMind* is also an excellent resource to the average citizen who may feel overwhelmed by the enormous amounts of data surrounding climate change, and environmental

degradation. Lappé's wisdom and style has the ability to reinvigorate and energize the green movement to an unprecedented level through the writings of *EcoMind*.

Matthew Fiala. <matthew.fiala@gmail.com>, Graduate Student, Professional Science Masters in Water Resource Management, University of the District of Columbia, 4200 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20008. TEL: 1-979-253-1789

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