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In *Profit*, Mark Stoll tells “the story of how” our consumer capitalist world came to be, by narrating “the history of capitalism through the stories of a series of individuals who represent either the opening of a significant new stage of capitalism or the development of influential movements to control its environmental impacts” (p. 4). *Profit* traces these intertwined and affective relationships between capitalism and the environment in nine chapters.

This study begins with the precursors and progenitors of capitalism in the first chapter, while the second lays out medieval antecedents to capitalism. The next two chapters trace capitalism’s youth and maturing through a series of technological, social, and environmental changes, especially the transition from renewable to fossil fuels, through the careers of James Watt and Andrew Carnegie. In chapter 5, Stoll considers the emergence of conservation through characters like George Perkins Marsh and William Stanley Jevons. The next three chapters mostly portray American consumer capitalism’s evolution in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, which has wreaked the most environmental damage. From discussions of Alfred Sloan and Henry Ford to Ray Kroc and Jeff Bezos, these chapters are where Stoll most critically responds to our current lives and practices. In the last chapter on the rise of global environmentalism, Stoll traces moves across the globe to manage the terrible impact of consumer capitalism. Using such figures as Rachel Carson and Barbara Ward, Stoll attempts to tell a nuanced and global story.

Unlike powerful commentaries on capitalism, *Profit* is a history of capitalism, surveying change over time and intertwined relationships with the environment. Using people, places, and processes as central characters, Stoll’s storytelling is incisive and compelling. Moving thematically without necessarily being beholden to only chronology, *Profit* is a thin volume with profound impacts. Throughout the book, there are some gems: for example, “with a relatively tiny number of people in a few coastal enclaves, the English became imperialist almost by chance” (p. 78). Stoll’s writing is delight-
ful, making for an enjoyable deep read, and not merely a skim.

As quibbles go this is small, but I do wish Stoll had framed this book more prominently as an environmental history of solely American profit and capitalism, because as he acknowledges in the introduction, he concentrates on both American and western European capitalism. And this is a veritable intellectual project in and of itself, with much impact. While Stoll is conscious about the particular stories he chose to highlight, I wonder if there is more room for Indigenous responses to profit, especially in the last chapter. On balance, the last chapter stretches itself very thin, where the intellectual focus on profit is most diffused and leaves room for small errors, such as mislabeling the Narmada dam in India. Stretched thin, there is little room to do deep dives into local movements like Chipko, which remain unknown to most non-Indian readers. I also wonder if the global sixties gave rise to the global environmentalists’ seventies, a transition and relationship that has perhaps not been interrogated enough in the historiography.

As Stoll reminds us, the development of capitalism was far from inevitable, but it did come to be. He proceeds to lay out the intellectual, social, and political context for its development. Stoll claims that the best we can do is “ameliorate” capitalism’s worst effects, and the story he tells disrupts the inevitability and the particularly pervasive teleology that plagues capitalism (p. 9). And this is where, to me, as a reader, this story is most hopeful. In exposing the contexts for and of capitalism, Stoll also lays out how we could rethink a world post-capitalism. He does not take on the task himself, understandably, but does open avenues to think beyond capitalism, without falling prey to dichotomies. In a world as divided and at peril as ours, Profit makes for an excellent teaching resource, one around which instructors could easily curate locationally specific readings while using the book as the intellectual backbone of an environmental history survey class. Profit could not have come at a more prescient time.
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