

"The mathematics of the statement, 'Anyone who believes exponential growth can go on forever in a finite world is either a madman or an economist' . . . is simple and unquestioned. Yet it has been conveniently ignored, not only by most economists over the last century, but many politicians, social scientists, and ecologists as well. In his excellent *Shrinking the Earth*, Donald Worster makes the convincing case that this disconnect between simple mathematics and the ivory towers ultimately stems from the discovery of the western Hemisphere by Europeans, which essentially doubled their carrying capacity."—JEFFREY C. NEKOLA, *Trends in Ecology & Evolution*

"Worster's is a humane eye; his new book thoughtful instead of hectoring, filled with profound insights."—GAYLORD DOLD, *The Wichita Eagle*

"Thinking beyond national politics may be necessary to address the social fractures we are seeing on every continent. This is the central message Donald Worster offers in . . . *Shrinking the Earth*. . . . Underlying the social and political tensions of the world, he argues, is concern that the future may not promise the growth opportunities it once did. . . . This is the central irony in Worster's analysis: an economy based on New World bounty has been expanding while the bounty itself has been shrinking. This contradiction between expectation and experience has contributed to strange politics all over the planet, ideologies that reflect a fear that the dream of endless progress cannot be realized."—SHEN HOU, *Environmental History*

"A far-ranging intellectual history of scientific, economic, and ecological thought in Europe and the United States, emphasizing how leading voices in these disciplines either accepted the finiteness of natural resources or argued that limits, if they existed at all, could be overcome through science, technology, and human ingenuity. True to the rest of Worster's extensive corpus, this history of ideas about abundance, scarcity, and limits is grounded firmly in a material history of the resources themselves. . . . This book is far more than a sweeping review of ideas about nature and resources. Worster argues forcefully and persuasively that after half a millennium of abundance originating from the discovery of the Western Hemisphere, the world has reached its 'full complement of riches.' Our future well-being will depend on acknowledging and responding to nature's limits."—PHILIP GARONE, *American Historical Review*

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